TAYLOR SWIFT

Her Easter Egg Secrets DECODED!

A Swiftie's Guide
to 80+ of the pop icon's best hidden messages

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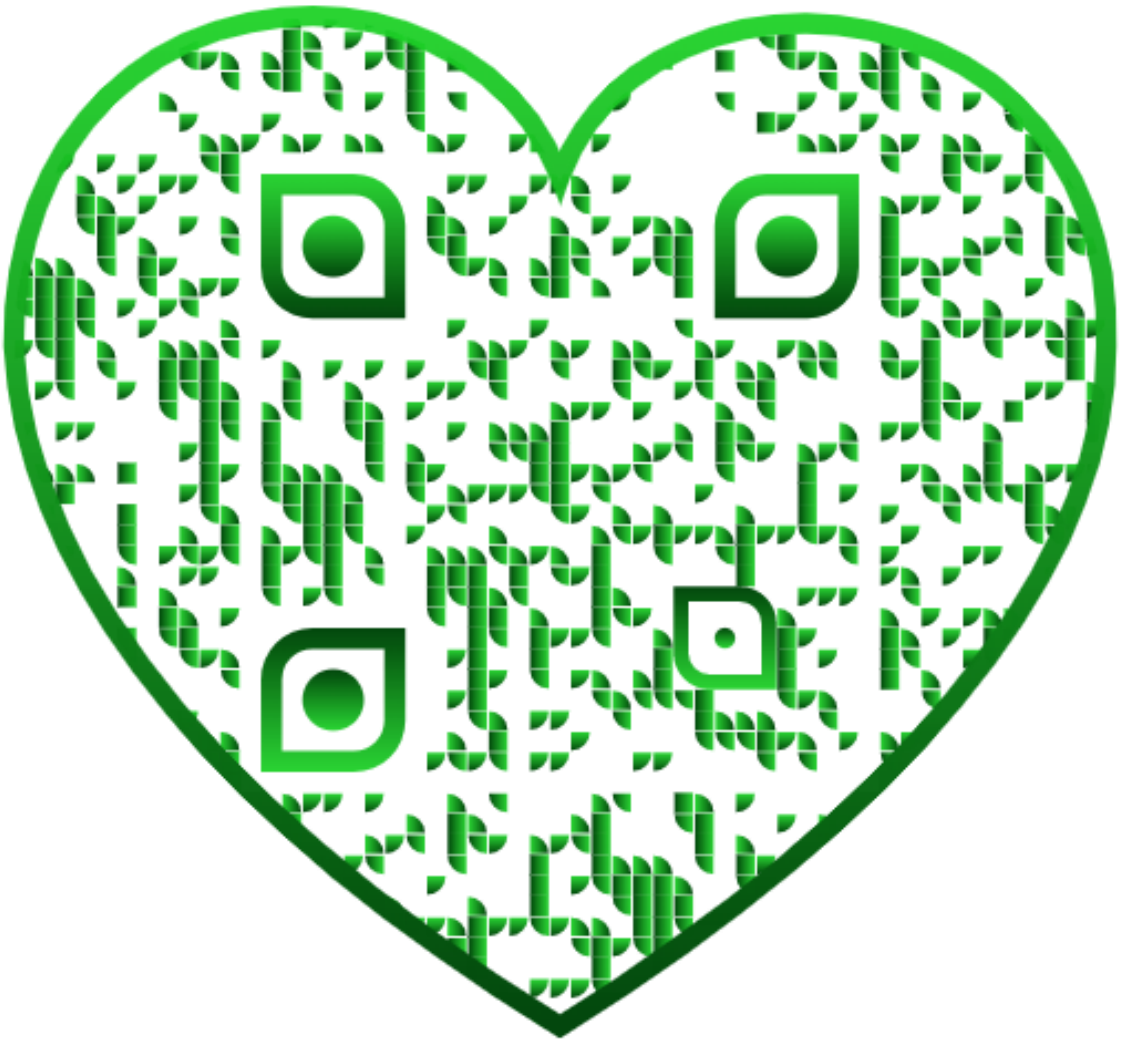

TAYLOR
SWIFT

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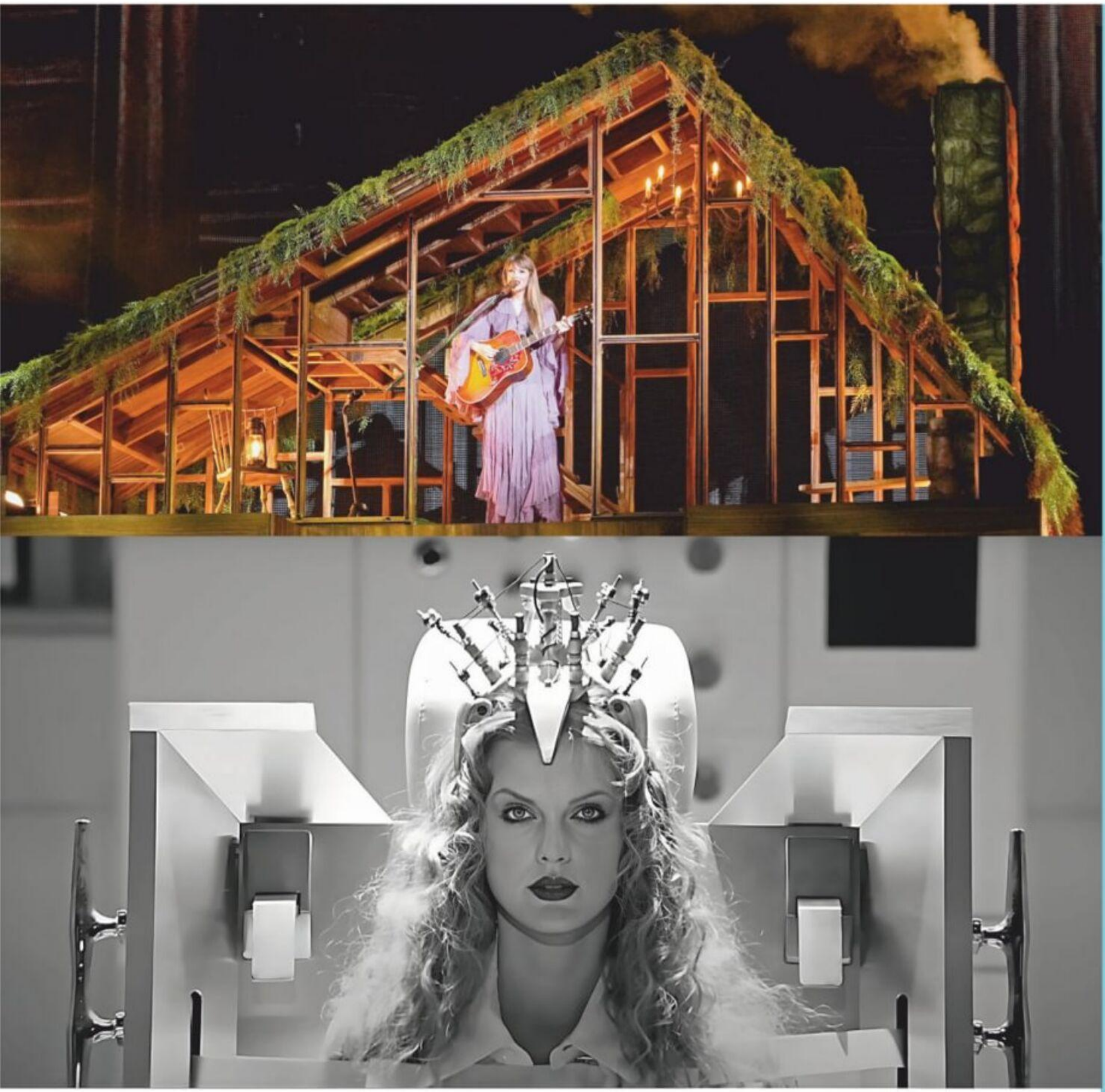

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The Mastermind

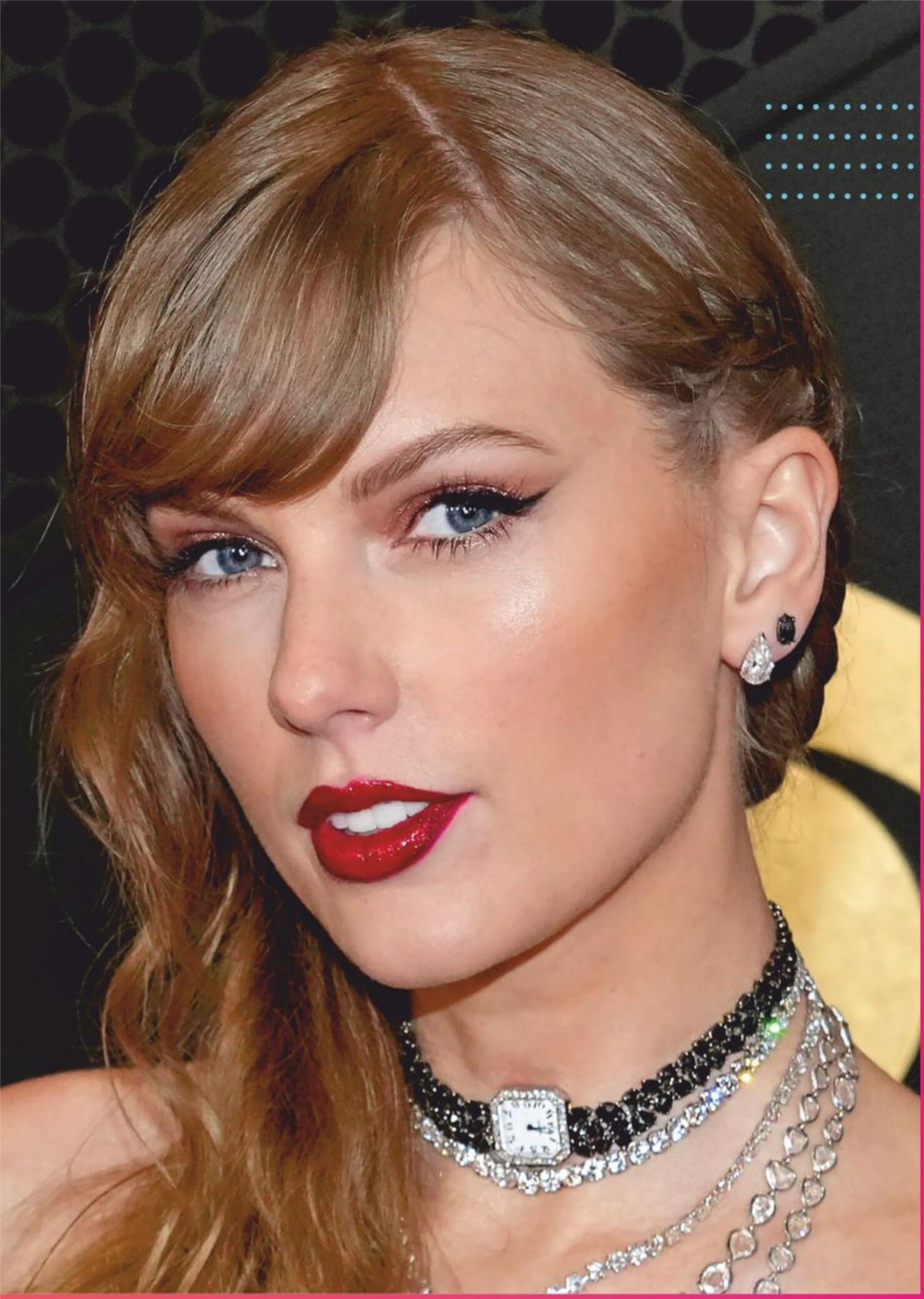
TAYLOR SWIFT HAS TURNED HIDING EASTER EGGS ABOUT HER MUSIC INTO AN ART

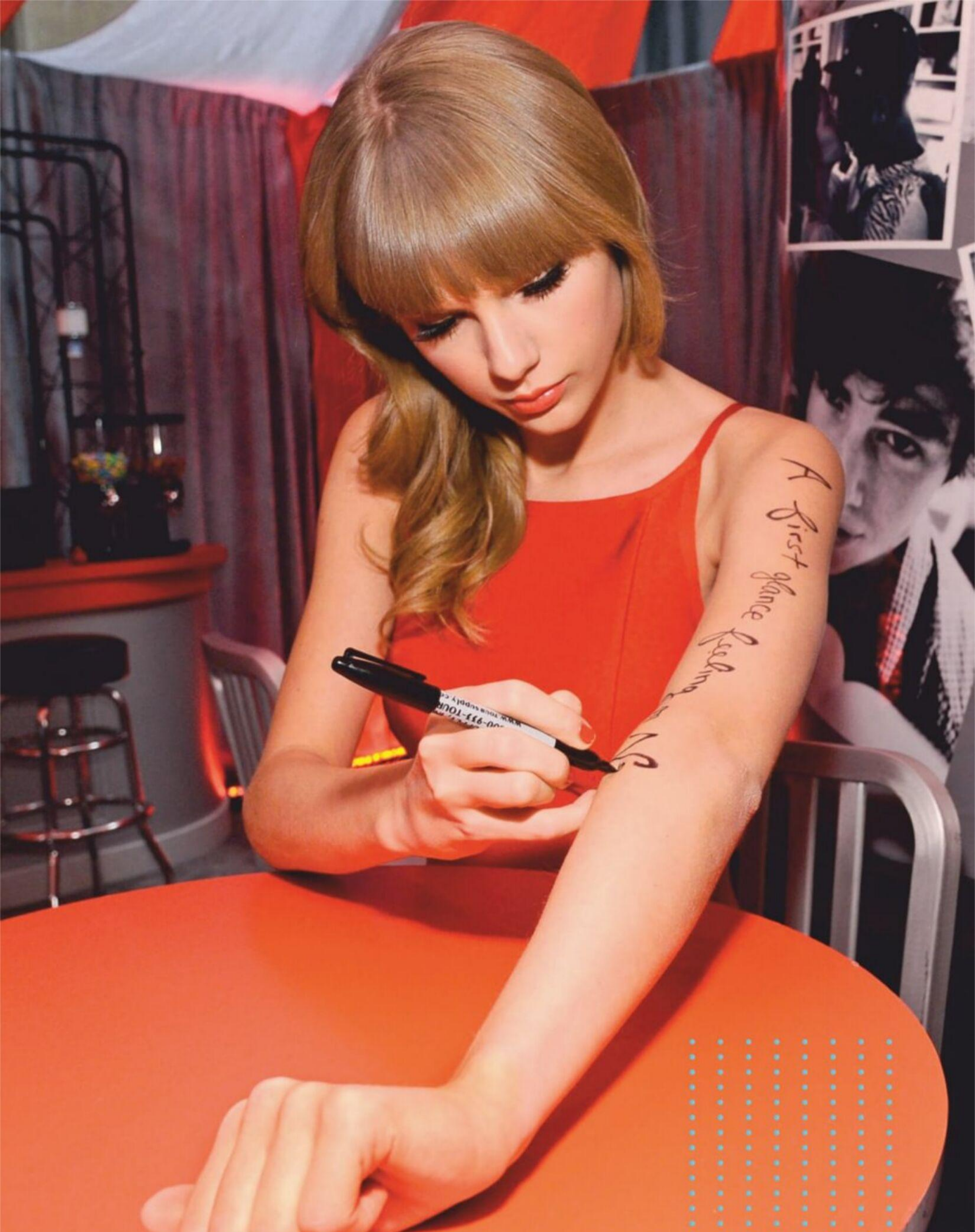
When it comes to hiding Easter eggs, the Easter bunny's got nothing on Taylor Swift. Over the years, the pop icon has become synonymous with leaving coded hints and messages about her songs and upcoming albums wherever she can for Swifties to decipher. "I love to communicate through Easter eggs," she told *Entertainment Weekly* in 2019. "I think the best messages are cryptic ones."

Growing up, Swift remembers poring over other artists' CD booklets, telling late-night host Jimmy Fallon that she would "read the teeny, tiny print and just obsess over it." Now she's giving her fans a reason to analyze her lyrics, too. "It's sort of a tradition that we started a very long time ago," she said on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* in November 2021. "I think the first time I started dropping sort of cryptic clues and things in my music was when I was 14 and 15, putting together my first album. And I wanted to do something that incentivized fans to read the lyrics because my lyrics are what I'm most proud of out of everything that I do, every aspect of my job."

For the first several albums, it meant displaying her lyrics in all lowercase letters, then dropping in capital letters to spell out a secret code or passage, she said. The purpose was to tell fans "a story about the album or hint about what the song was about." Since the scavenger hunt began, the singer has started dropping riddles in more than just her liner notes and lyrics. She winks at them in interviews, her clothing and accessories, music videos, social media posts... and sleuthing Swifties are always ready for them. "I've trained them to be that way," Swift told *Entertainment Weekly*. "I love that they like the cryptic hint-dropping. Because as long as they like it, I'll keep doing it. It's fun. It feels mischievous and playful."

As fans celebrate the release of Swift's 11th album, *The Tortured Poets Department*, there are even more Easter eggs to seek out. In this book, explore more than 80 hidden messages Swift has created over the years. Happy decoding!




A first glance

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

THE LINER NOTES

THIS IS PLACE WHERE ALL
THE EASTER EGGS BEGAN

1. WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE OF "MAPLE LATTES" IN THE *RED* LINER NOTES FOR "ALL TOO WELL"?

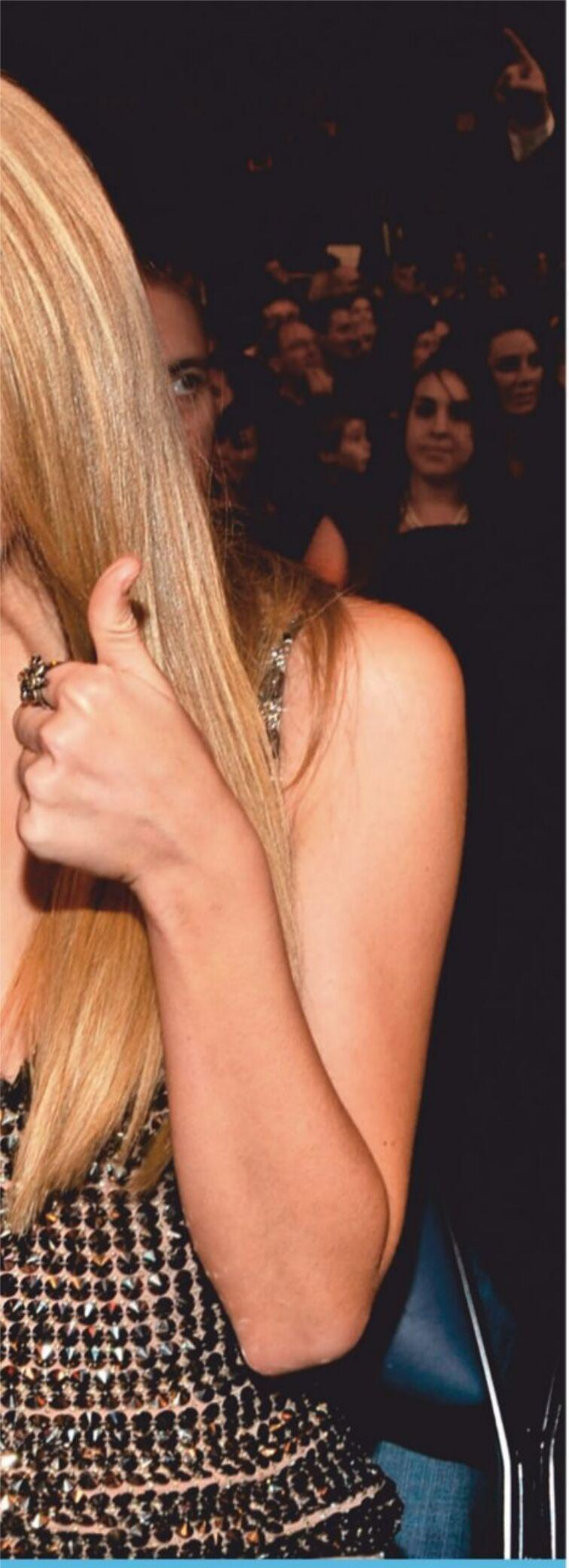
It's a small detail but **maple lattes were supposedly the drink of choice for Swift and Jake Gyllenhaal** when they'd go on coffee dates over Thanksgiving 2010. The then-couple were photographed that fall walking around Brooklyn with to-go cups of joe from a neighborhood cafe. Taylor's coded message in the "All Too Well" liner notes seems to indicate to fans that the song is about her former beau.

2. *True or False: The "Tay" spelled out in the "Back to December" liner notes refers to Taylor Hanson.*

False. Although Swift has said in the past that she's a fan of Taylor Hanson (of the band Hanson), the song is about Taylor Lautner, whom Swift dated briefly in late 2009. The pair met on the set of the movie *Valentine's Day*, in which they played a high school couple on the big screen before getting together in real life. Their courtship lasted only a few months, but they remain friends and Lautner all but confirmed the song is about him during a Facebook Live session with his *Scream Queen* co-stars in 2016.

3 Who is William Bowery?

William Bowery is listed as a contributor on some tracks on *Folklore*, *Evermore* and *Midnights*. But fans soon figured out that the moniker is a pen name for Swift's then-boyfriend **Joe Alwyn.** How did he come up with it? "It was a combination of William, my great-grandfather, who I never actually met, [who] was a composer," Alwyn explained on *The Kelly Clarkson Show* in May 2022. "He wrote a lot of classical music and he wrote a lot of film scores. And then Bowery is the area in New York that I spent a lot of time in when I first went over there."



4

For what song did Swift hide the secret message "God Bless Andrea Swift"?

"The Best Day" is a song that Taylor recorded for her mom, Andrea Swift, for the singer's 2008 album *Fearless*, which is evident by the liner notes message. "It was very sneaky and fun," Taylor said during a 2023 Philadelphia show that took place on Mother's Day, of recording the tune. "I wrote this song just compiling these sort of core childhood memories I had of not just her as a mother, but her as a friend."

5. WHO IS "ADAM," THE NAME THAT'S HIDDEN IN THE "ENCHANTED" NOTES?

That would be **Adam Young, better known as the one-man outfit Owl City**. After meeting Young, Swift went back to her hotel and started writing. "Enchanted," off *Speak Now*, was born. "I love writing songs because I love preserving memories, like putting a picture frame around a feeling you once had," Taylor told *Elle* in 2019. Young was touched and Owl City released a cover of the song on Valentine's Day as a thank you.

6. *Swift hides the message "Hyannis Port" in the liner notes for "Everything Has Changed." What does it mean?*

Taylor dated Conor Kennedy in summer 2012, and most of the short-lived fling took place in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts. She even bought a house in town across the street from the home of Ethel Kennedy (the Kennedy family matriarch and Conor's grandmother), which she later sold in 2013. That's why Swifties believe the encoded message "Hyannis Port" in the lyrics of "Everything Has Changed" means **the song is about Conor**.

7

What sentence is spelled out in the liner notes for "Bad Blood"?

"She made friends and enemies." The *1989* track has long been believed to be about fellow pop star Katy Perry. Although they are on good terms today—Perry even attended one of Swift's Eras Tour shows in Sydney—the two were embroiled in a feud a few years ago. The rumblings of a beef first started when Swift told *Rolling Stone* in 2014 that "Bad Blood" was about another woman artist (presumably Perry) who Swift says she was friendly with, until she "basically tried to sabotage an entire arena tour. She tried to hire a bunch of people out from under me. And I'm surprisingly non-confrontational—you would not believe how much I hate conflict. So, now I have to avoid her." But it's all water under the bridge now.

CHAPTER 1

8. WHAT CITY DOES SHE SPELL OUT IN THE LINER NOTES FOR "SPARKS FLY"?

The hidden message for the *Speak Now* song is **"Portland, Oregon."** Fans think that the hint points to the song being about Jake Owen, a country artist she performed with in 2006 at a bar in what city? Portland. "The songs that came from this time in my life were marked by their brutal honesty, unfiltered diaristic confessions and wild wistfulness," she captioned a post on Instagram about who she was when she wrote the songs for *Speak Now*.

9

What message did Swift hide in the liner notes for "Picture to Burn"?

The track, of course, is about a self-centered ex who's "really bad at lying" and on whom she's planning her "revenge." For this song off Swift's eponymous 2006 debut album, she hid the message **"date nice boys"** in the liner notes. Sounds like good advice to us.

NUMBER

CHAPTER 2

13

THE LUCKY NUMBER

EVERY SWIFTIE WORTH THEIR SALT KNOWS
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NUMBER 13

1 True or False: Swift hides the number 13 at least three times in the "You Need to Calm Down" video.

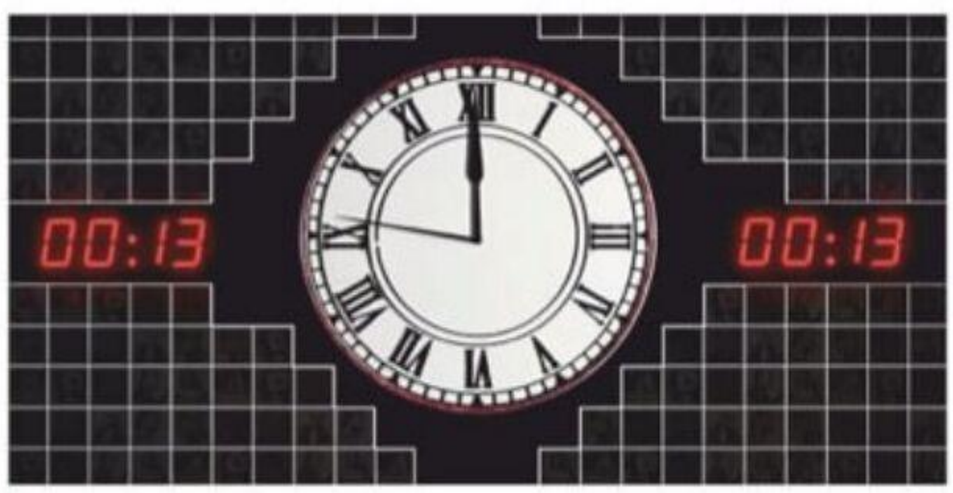
True. The first appears in the opening of the video, when Swift looks at her cat watch with a light blue wristband. The face of the timepiece replaces the 1 with a 13. Then in the scenes where she's walking out of her trailer and lounging in the pool, she's rocking a pair of sunglasses with 13 gems on them. After a rainbow-colored Western costume change, she wears a 13 pendant necklace to complete her outfit.

2. WHERE DOES TAYLOR HIDE THE NUMBER 13 IN THE "FORTNIGHT" MUSIC VIDEO?

To start, **the video is 4:09 minutes** long. Using Swiftie math, 4 + 9 = 13. There are also fans who have pointed out that some of **the bobby pins in Taylor's hair** in the opening scenes (where she's dressed like silent film star Clara Bow—another Easter egg) seemingly also form the Roman numeral for 13, or XIII. Coincidence? Most likely not.

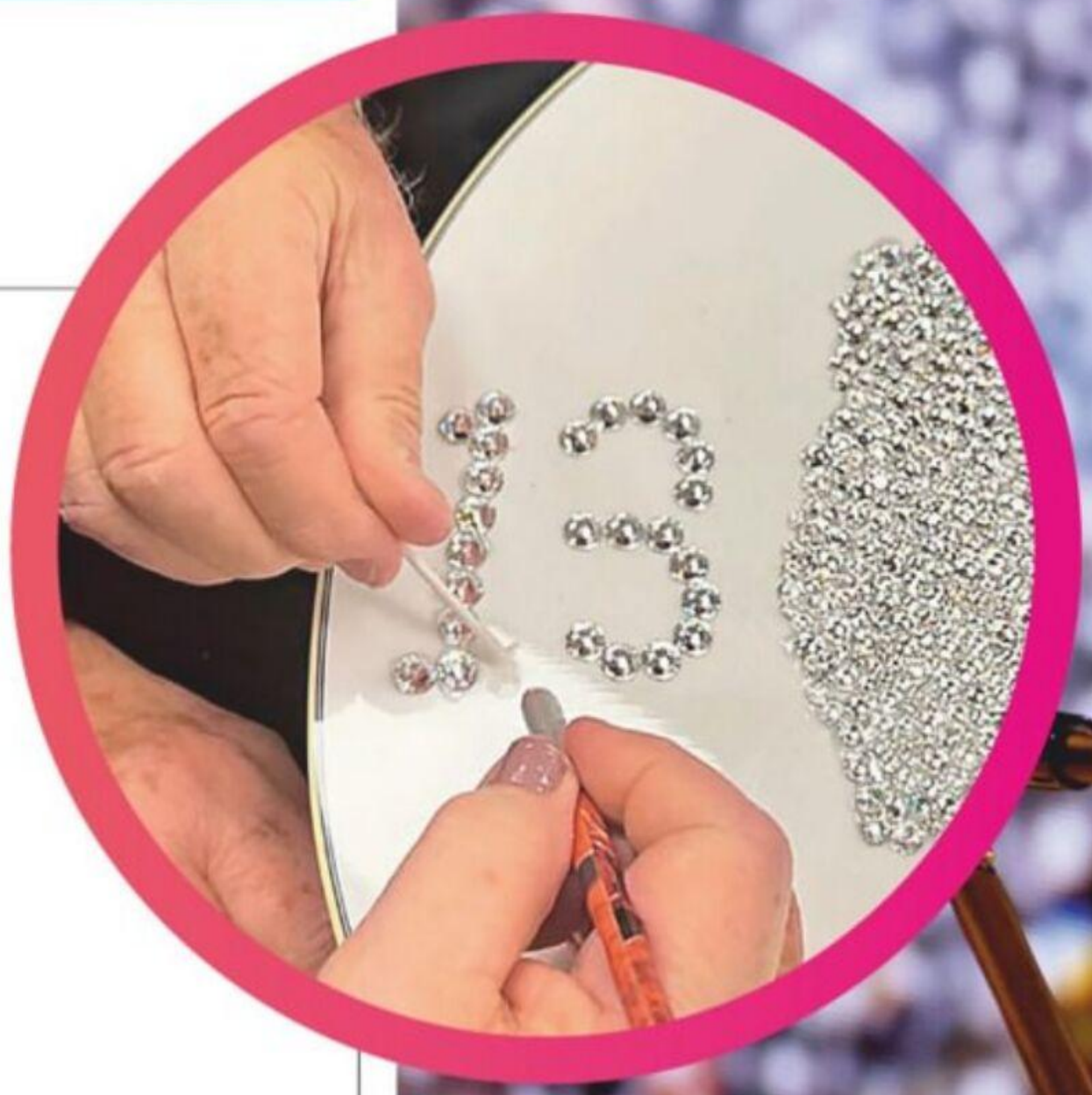
3. How does the Eras Tour movie open?

With a countdown clock that starts at 13 seconds and ticks down to zero from there. (The countdown clock also plays a part during the live concert, but it starts at two minutes rather than 13 seconds.) The movie was filmed over Swift's Eras Tour dates at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, in August 2023.



4

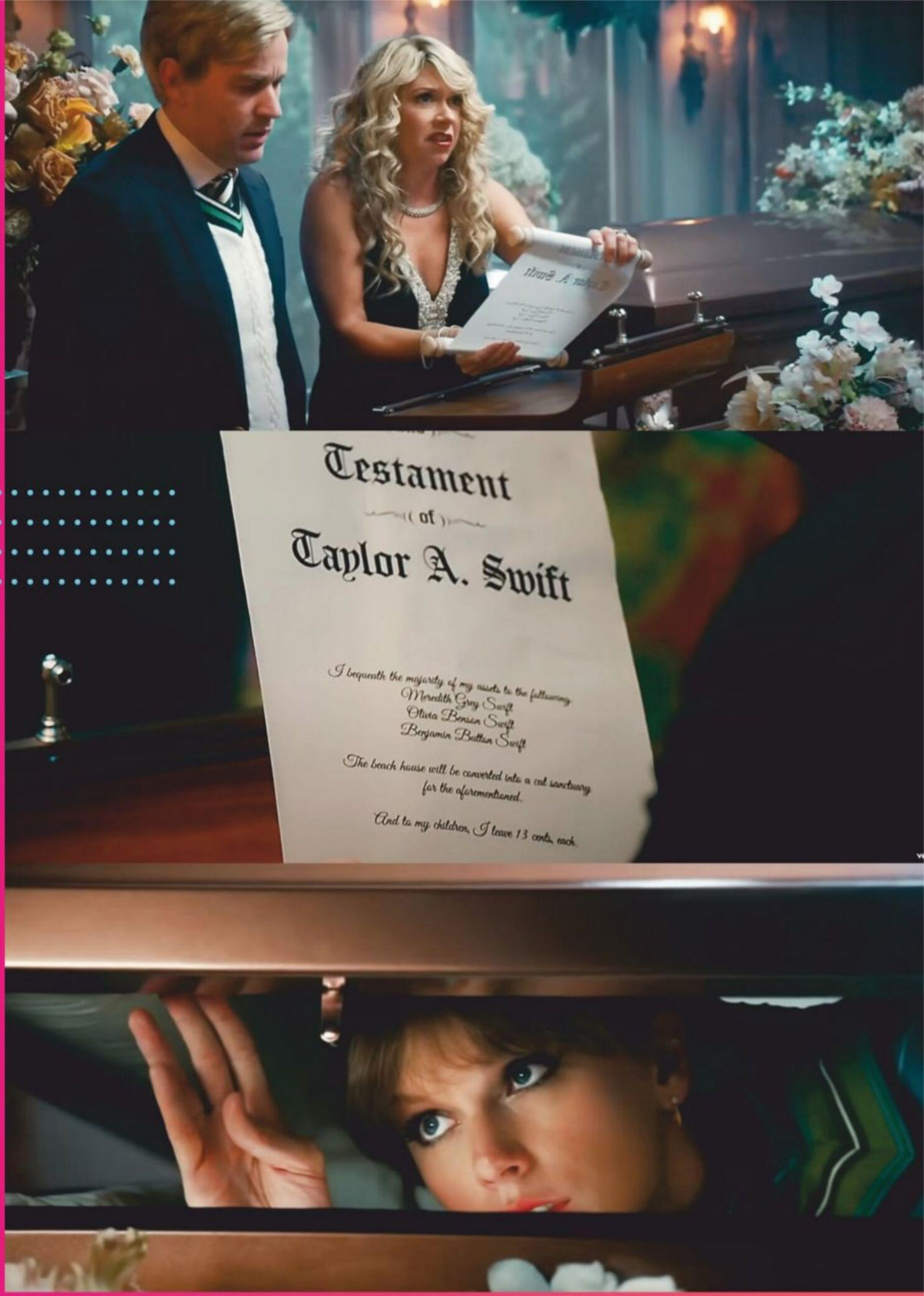
Who bedazzled a "13" on her guitar for the Eras Tour?



During the *Fearless* portion of Swift's Eras Tour show, she emerges onstage playing a bedazzled silver acoustic guitar. Within the sea of jewels are larger baubles that spell out 13 on the wider part of the instrument's face. In an Instagram Story, Swift put up a multiple choice quiz question asking fans who they thought designed her guitar: a) artisans and finely trained craftsmen, b) a professional musical instrument manufacturer, or c) **my parents with super glue and a free afternoon.** The answer was C, and the post included a close-up photo of her parents' hands gluing on the rhinestones as well as a homemade stage pass she made that reads "D.O.H. Pass," meaning "Dad of Headliner."

5. WHAT MADE RELEASING *FOLKLORE* AND *EVERMORE* IN 2020 SPECIAL FOR SWIFT?

On Dec. 13, 2020, Swift turned 31, which is the reverse of her favorite number, so releasing sister albums *Folklore* and *Evermore* at the end of that year proved meaningful for the singer. "Ever since I was 13, I've been excited about turning 31 because it's my lucky number backwards, which is why I wanted to surprise you with this now," she posted on social media on Dec. 10, 2020, the day *Evermore* dropped and three days before her birthday. She also tipped her hat to the number by putting 16 tracks on *Folklore* and 15 songs on *Evermore*—the standard editions—which equals 31.


Testament
of
Taylor A. Swift
I bequeath the majority of my assets to the following
Meredith Grey Swift
Olivia Benson Swift
Benjamin Button Swift
The beach house will be converted into a cat sanctuary
for the aforementioned.
And to my children, I leave 13 cents, each.

6

How much does Swift leave in her will to her future children in the "Anti-Hero" video?

In the comical funeral scene of the "Anti-Hero" video, Swift's future sons and daughter-in-law (played by John Early, Mike Birbiglia and Mary Elizabeth Ellis) read her last will and testament only to discover that Swift leaves more to her cats than to the kids. Her wishes state, "I bequeath the majority of my assets to the following: Meredith Grey Swift, Olivia Benson Swift, Benjamin Button Swift. The beach house will be converted into a cat sanctuary for the aforementioned. And to my children, I leave **13 cents, each**."

7. What does the 13 on Taylor's hand in the "I Can See You" video call back to?

"I Can See You" is a previously unreleased track that appears on 2023's *Speak Now (Taylor's Version)*. The music video stars Joey King and Presley Cash (who both appeared in Swift's MV for "Mean" in 2010) and ex-boyfriend Taylor Lautner, who are on a *Mission Impossible*–style operation to break Swift out of a heavily fortified vault. The visual is laden with Easter eggs, but one that's of note is the number 13 written on Taylor's hand—a very specific placement that **pays homage to her *Fearless* and *Speak Now* eras, during which she used to paint "13" on her hand for good luck before every show.**

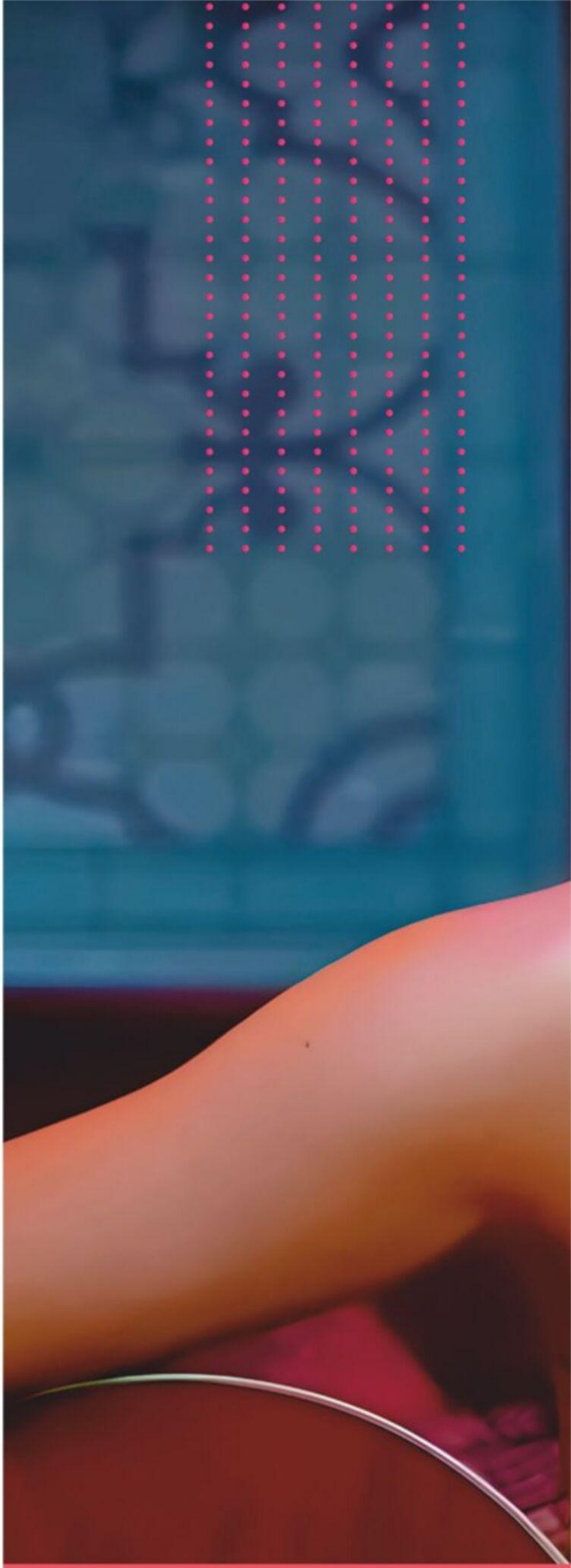
8. HOW DOES SWIFT COMMEMORATE HER FAVORITE NUMBER ON "THE LUCKY ONE"?

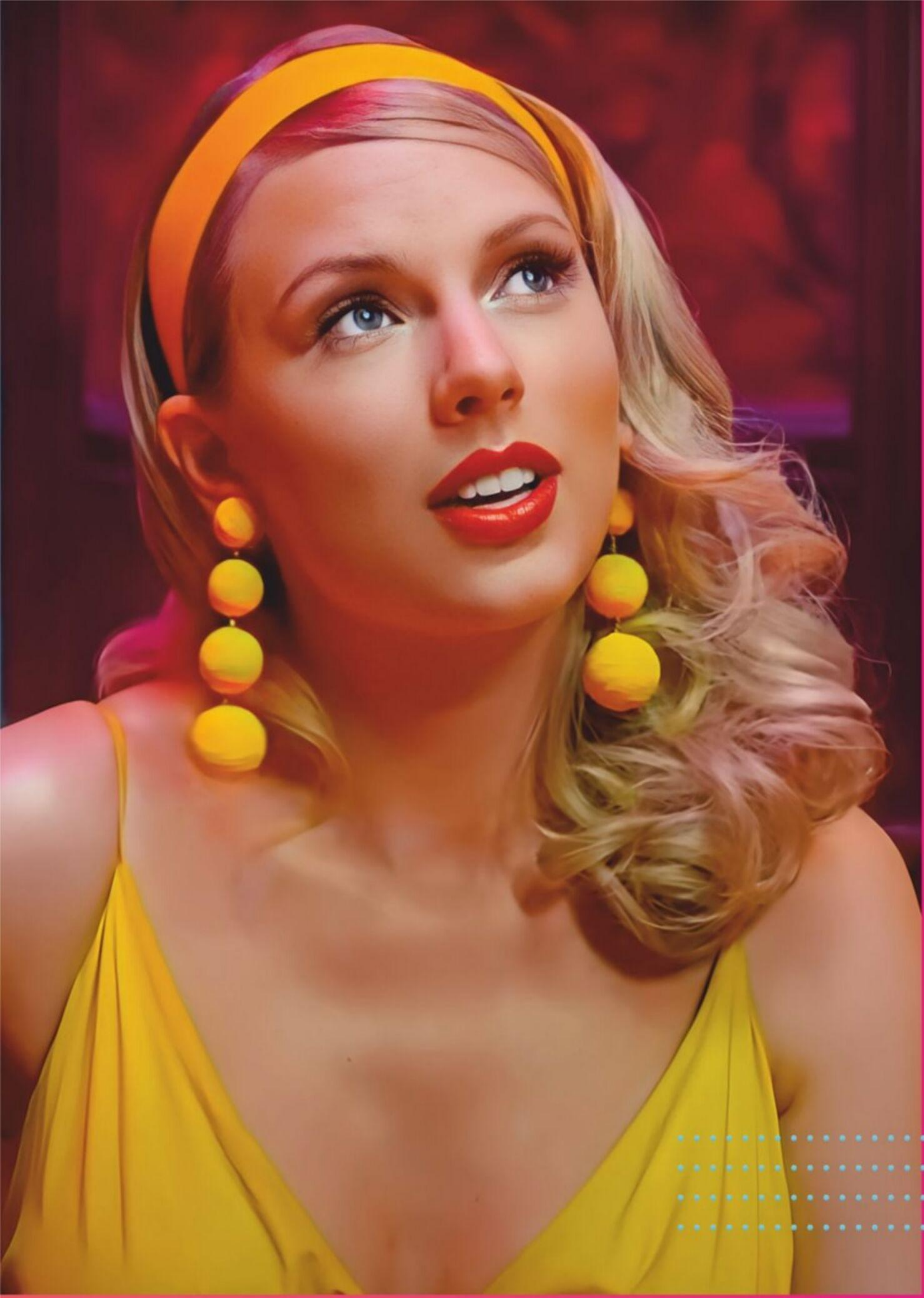
She gives the song a 13-second intro to start. She also includes the word "lucky" on 13 separate occasions in the lyrics for the track. And most obviously, she placed the track in the 13th spot on her 2012 album, *Red*.

CHAPTER 2

Why did Swift release *Lover* on Aug. 23, 2019?

At least **one reason had to do with her lucky number.** "An easy way to remember that date is August is the eighth month of the year and then 23, two plus three, so you just add it all together: eight plus two plus three equals I'm obnoxious. So you know, everything—if you just want to remember that, oh, it adds up to 13," Swift explained on Instagram Live in June 2019.





LYRICS

CHAPTER 3

CODE

THE LYRICS

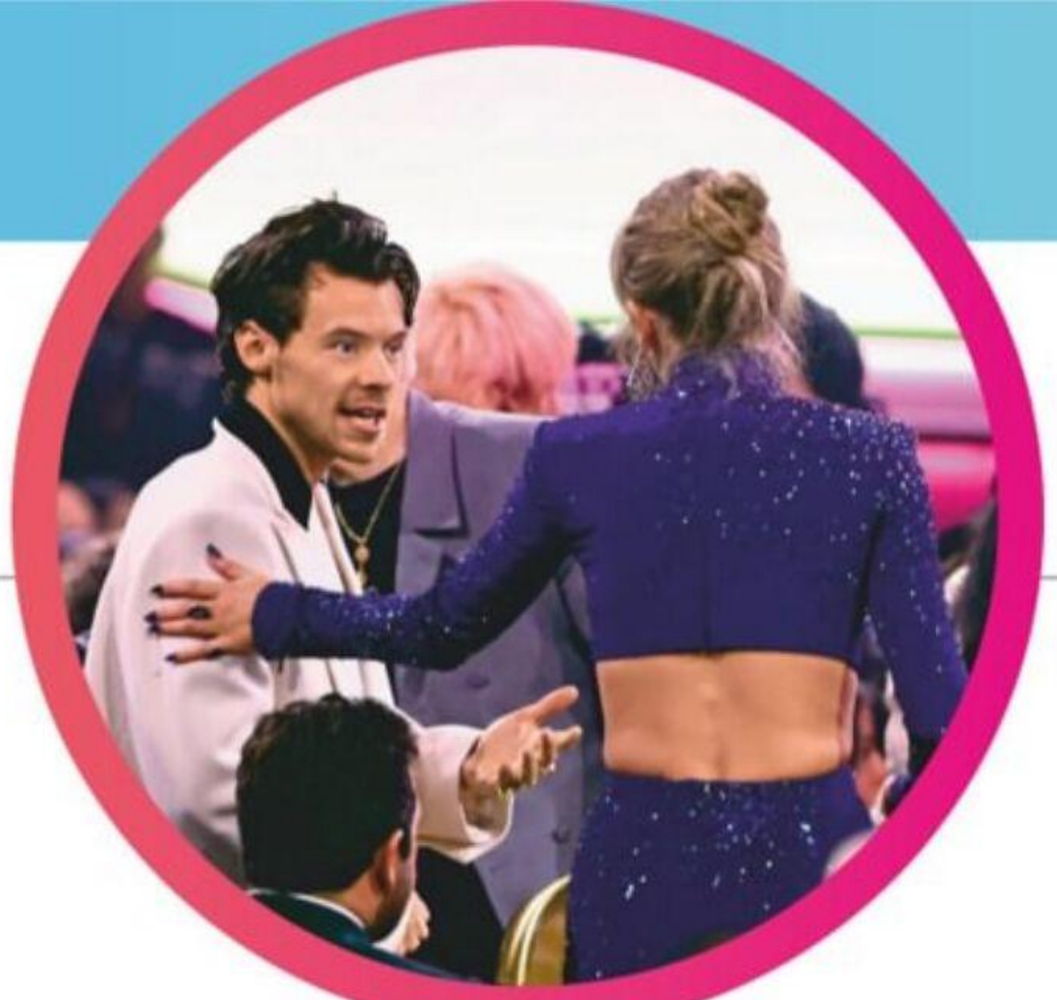
SWIFTIES LOVE ANALYZING
THE HIDDEN MESSAGES IN HER SONGS

CHAPTER 3

1

What song's lyrics did Taylor Swift hide in her NYU commencement address?

"Labyrinth," off *Midnights*. On May 22, 2022, several months before her album dropped that October, Swift was invited by New York University to receive an honorary doctorate in fine arts and to give the commencement address to that year's graduating class at Yankee Stadium. Wearing a black cap and purple gown, Swift urged the graduates not to get discouraged by the hard times and to be resilient. Closing her speech, she said, "As long as we are fortunate enough to be breathing, we will breathe in, breathe through, breathe deep, breathe out," which we now know are lyrics in the first verse of "Labyrinth." Swift then joked, "And I'm a doctor now, so I know how breathing works."



2

True or False: Swift's callout about her cats in "Gorgeous" is a reference to a red carpet interview.

True, probably. In the bridge of the *Reputation* track, Taylor sings, "Guess I'll just stumble on home to my cats (ugh) alone / Unless you wanna come along." It's believed this line is a nod to a viral 2015 Grammys red carpet interview, during which a reporter from *Entertainment Tonight* remarked to Swift, "You're going to walk home with more than maybe just a trophy tonight, I think lots of men." The singer quickly responded, "I'm not going home with any men tonight. I'm going to go hang out with my friends, and then I go home to the cats."

3. WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE "BLUE DRESS" IN "IS IT OVER NOW"?

The vault track from *1989 (Taylor's Version)* is highly suspected to be about ex-boyfriend Harry Styles, and one big reason fans believe this is because of the mention of the "blue dress" in the lyrics, as well as a reference to the snowmobile accident they reportedly got into when they were dating in late 2012. "When you lost control / Red blood, white snow / Blue dress on a boat / Your new girl is my clone," she sings on the track. Swift and Styles famously broke up in January 2013 while on a getaway to the British Virgin Islands, where Swift—wearing a blue dress—was photographed leaving on a boat to go to the airport.

4. *What does the "narcotics" lyric symbolize in "Who's Afraid of Little Old Me?"*

In the *Tortured Poets Department* track, Swift ruminates on a lifetime in the spotlight, revealing that she wrote the song while feeling "bitter about just all the things we do to our artists as a society and as a culture." At the end of the bridge, she sings of being accused of putting "narcotics into all of my songs / And that's why you're still singin' along." One theory laid out by *The Cut* is that "narcotics" is **a metaphor for the Easter eggs she drops into her tracks**, which keep Swifties obsessed and constantly on the hunt. If it truly is an Easter egg about all of her Easter eggs, that's some meta, next-level stuff.

5. WHO DO FANS THINK "SPIDERBOY" REFERS TO IN "KARMA"?

Analyzing Swifties theorize that the "Spiderboy" lyric in the *Midnights* track is a code name for **Scooter Braun** and **Scott Borchetta**, whose initials conveniently match up with the phrase. Fans also think the song is about the feud she has with the men over the sale of the masters to her first six albums. She sings, "Spiderboy, king of thieves / Weave your little webs of opacity / My pennies made your crown / Trick me once, trick me twice / Don't you know that cash ain't the only price? / It's coming back around." The "king of thieves" line could be a reference to Braun's investment in 100 Thieves, an eSports, lifestyle and apparel brand.

6

Whose "tilted stage" is Swift singing about in "Look What You Made Me Do"?

Revenge mode on. In the dance-pop lead single from 2017's *Reputation*, Swift comes for frequent adversary **Kanye West**, among others, singing, "I don't like your little games / Don't like your tilted stage / The role you made me play of the fool / No, I don't like you." West's Saint Pablo tour included a floating stage that tilted in all directions. The song was a response to West's controversial single "Famous," which name-drops Swift. On it he raps, "I feel like me and Taylor might still have sex / Why? I made that b---- famous."

7

Where is "Cornelia Street"?

As Swift notes in the *Lover* track, she rented "a place on Cornelia Street" in **New York's Greenwich Village** in 2016 for a few months while her Tribeca residence was being renovated. The song is widely believed to be about the early days of her relationship with Joe Alwyn. In a 2019 interview with Elvis Duran, Swift said about the tune, "It's about the things that took place and the memories that took place on that street... all the nostalgia. Sometimes we bond our memories to the places that they happen. I wrote it alone and it ended up being one of my favorite songs."

8. WHO IS "THE SMALLEST MAN WHO EVER LIVED"?

Fans seem to be divided on this one. Some think the most obvious answer is that the *TTPD* track is about Matty Healy, frontman of The 1975, with whom Swift had a brief romance in May 2023, after news broke that she and Joe Alwyn had split up. In the song, she sings about the subject wearing a "Jehovah's Witness suit" (Healy often wears suits during The 1975's shows), trying to buy pills from a friend of a friend (he's been open about his drug addiction), and ruining her "sparkling summer" (their courtship ended in June 2023). There's also a theory floating around that the bitter tune is about Scott Borchetta, who's also known to wear suits and who sold Big Machine (and the masters to Taylor's first six albums along with it) to Scooter Braun's Ithaca Holdings in June 2019, i.e., ruining her summer.

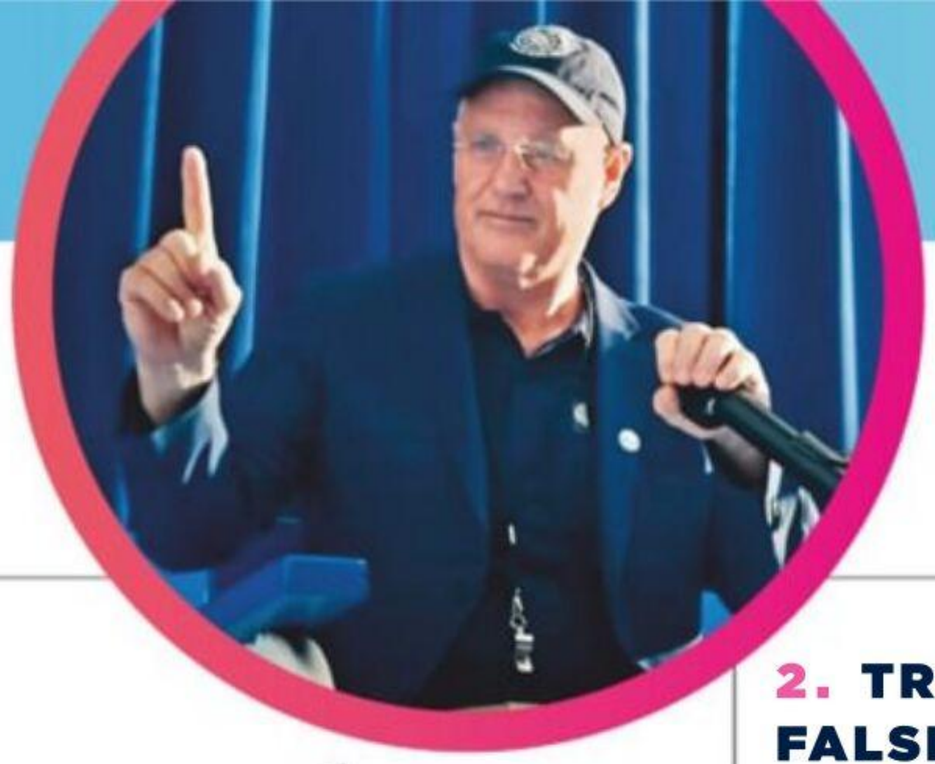
9. *Why is "Mean" thought to be about music critic Bob Lefsetz?*

Lefsetz dragged Swift after an unfortunate performance with Stevie Nicks at the 52nd Annual Grammy Awards in January 2010. The 20-year-old singer went off-key and Lefsetz was particularly unforgiving. Griping in his newsletter, The Lefsetz Letter, he harped that she "can't sing." **Swift's biting response—"Mean"—seemingly uses Lefsetz's words against him:** "And I can see you years from now in a bar / Talking over a football game / With that same big, loud opinion / But nobody's listening / Washed up and ranting about the same old bitter things / Drunk and grumblin' on about how I can't sing / But all you are is mean."

CHAPTER 4

THE MUSIC VIDEOS

SWIFT'S MVS ARE RIFE WITH EASTER EGGS.
HAVE YOU SPOTTED THESE YET?



1

What was Swift winking to when she asked Ethan Hawke and Josh Charles to appear in the "Fortnight" video?

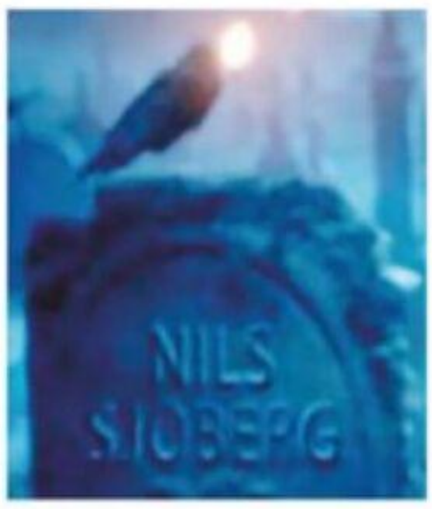
The two actors make cameos in the music video for "Fortnight," the first single off *The Tortured Poets Department*, as an homage to their 1989 coming-of-age feature film ***Dead Poets Society.*** In the video, Hawke and Charles wear lab coats with the last names of their *Dead Poets* characters stitched on them. "We laughed ourselves silly the whole day," Hawke recalled to late-night host Stephen Colbert of being on the "Fortnight" set. "We felt like the biggest rockstars in the world."

2. TRUE OR FALSE: SCOTT SWIFT PLAYS THE UMPIRE IN SWIFT'S "THE MAN" MUSIC VIDEO.

True. There are a number of cameos in the music video for "The Man" (including Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson), but there's one that especially stands out: Scott Swift, aka Taylor's dad, plays the umpire in the tennis scene. "So we have a very special performance in this video," Taylor said in a behind-the-scenes clip posted on Instagram. "And that is my dad playing the umpire of the tennis match where I had the royal meltdown because the umpire calls my shot out. And basically I start pelting my dad with tennis balls, which was, I think, exhilarating for both of us. I think it was a real bonding experience."

3. The name Nils Sjöberg is etched on a tombstone in the cemetery scene of the "Look What You Made Me Do" video. Who is that?

It's the **pseudonym Swift used** when she co-wrote "This Is What You Came For" with DJ-producer Calvin Harris, whom she dated from 2015–16. "I wrote under the name Nils Sjöberg because those are two of the most popular names of Swedish males," she said in a *Rolling Stone* chat with Paul McCartney. The video also calls out ex Tom Hiddleston when her dancers wear tops with "I [heart] T.S." He wore a tank top with the phrase while celebrating July 4th with Swift in 2016.



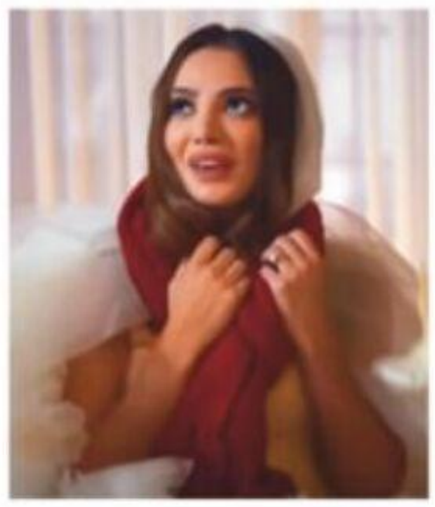
4

How does Swift nod to her relationship with Harry Styles in the "Style" music video?

When Harry Styles first became a household name competing on *The X Factor*, he was known to wear a necklace with a paper airplane charm and it became one of his signature pieces of jewelry. When he and Taylor began their whirlwind romance in late 2012, she was seen wearing a necklace that was identical to Harry's. Fans have long speculated that Swift wrote "Style" about the former One Direction member. And in the 13th second of the track's music video, there's a clear shot of that **paper airplane necklace**, adding fuel to fans' theory about the inspiration for the song.

5. WHAT TWO RED-COLORED OBJECTS APPEAR IN THE MUSIC VIDEOS FOR BOTH "I BET YOU THINK ABOUT ME" AND "ALL TOO WELL"?

In *All Too Well: The Short Film*, directed by Swift, a **red gift box** can be spotted in the party scene behind Sadie Sink. That same gift is seen again in the video for "I Bet You Think About Me," when Taylor gives it to the bride (Keleigh Teller). The box then vanishes and a **red scarf** appears around Teller's neck—the same one Sink wears in *All Too Well*. That scarf represents the one Taylor allegedly left at Maggie Gyllenhaal's house when she was dating Jake Gyllenhaal.



6

What did fans believe the koi fish in the "Lavender Haze" video meant?

For many longtime Swifties, the koi fish floating around the singer in her psychedelic "Lavender Haze" video—released on Jan. 23, 2023—harkened back to the ones that were illustrated on the iconic blue guitar that Swift first played during her 2011–12 Speak Now World Tour. That imagery could only mean one thing: ***Speak Now (Taylor's Version)* was on the way**. Less than six months later, the rerecording of Swift's third album dropped.

7. WHAT BOOK IS SWIFT HOLDING IN THE "FORTNIGHT" VIDEO, WHEN SHE AND POST MALONE ARE LYING ON THE GROUND?

As they lie on their sides facing each other, Swift is holding a book titled *Us*, a nod to her 2011 single "The Story of Us." The shot then pans out, revealing a silhouette of Taylor's profile made of sheets of paper with loose ones flying away. This may be a nod to the "Style" music video, which also features a large silhouette of Swift's head before revealing a man looking out on the ocean.

8. Which of her grandparents does Swift pay homage to in the "Cardigan" music video?

A photo of Swift's paternal grandfather, **Archie Dean Swift**, hangs on the wall in the MV. But it's not the only time she's paid tribute to her grandparents. She slips in a picture of maternal grandma Marjorie in "Anti-Hero." And images of all four grandparents—Archie Dean and Rose Swift, and Marjorie and Robert Finlay—appear in the lyric video for "Timeless," a vault track from *Speak Now (Taylor's Version)*.

CHAPTER 4

9

In what music video did Swift hint at the name of her *Lover* album?

Swift released the brightly colored video for her single **"Me! (feat. Brendon Urie)"** at 12 a.m. EST on April 26, 2019, before she formally confirmed her seventh studio album that June. But some sharp-eyed Swifties were able to guess the name of the new album (or at least the name of a new track) after spotting the word "Lover" in pink neon lights behind Swift as she sat atop a unicorn gargoyle. The video also begins with a snake slithering across the screen that bursts into a butterfly, signaling the end of the singer's *Reputation* era.

Lover

CHAPTER 5

THE FASHION

PAY ATTENTION TO SWIFT'S STYLE CHOICES.
THEY'RE FULL OF HIDDEN MEANING

1. WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE HAIR ACCESSORY TAYLOR WAS SPOTTED WEARING IN HER "FORTNIGHT" CHALLENGE VIDEO?

In the YouTube clip, Taylor wore a sea-shell-inspired hair clip from Anthropologie known as the Aimee claw. Swifties believe the accessory is a cheeky nod to her *TTPD: The Anthology* track "thanK you aIMee," which is a clear clapback at Kim Kardashian and their ongoing feud from 2016.

2. What could be the meaning behind the butterfly cutout jeans Swift was seen wearing post-split from Joe Alwyn?

Following the news that her six-year relationship with Joe Alwyn had ended, Swift turned heads when she was spotted in April 2023 going to New York City restaurant Via Carota with longtime friend and collaborator Jack Antonoff and his wife, actress Margaret Qualley. Swift wore a pair of cropped jeans with a bedazzled butterfly cutout on her left thigh. Did the butterfly point to rebirth for Taylor after her breakup? It's possible—Swift has said she views butterflies as symbolizing **"kind of just breaking free of that darkness and fluttering into the light."**

3

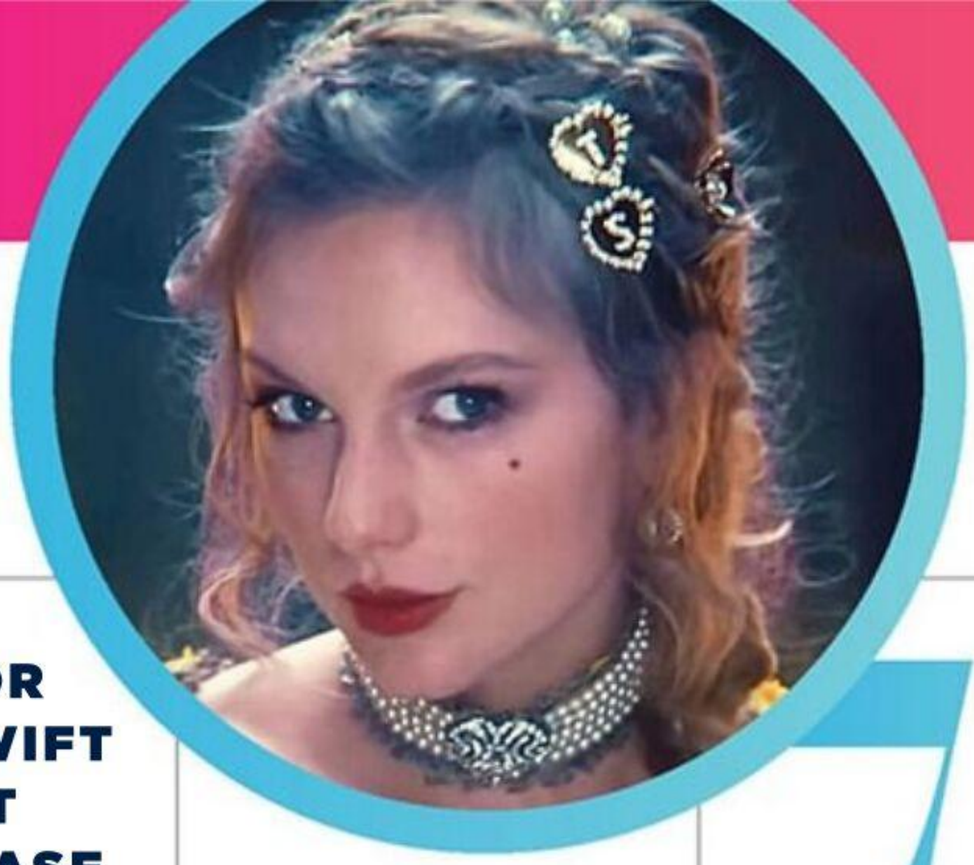
Taylor's ruched white Schiaparelli gown at the 2024 Grammy Awards hinted at what song?

There were a couple of theories about Swift's sartorial choice for the 2024 Grammys, but the most likely is that her white Schiaparelli haute couture gown, black opera gloves, and black-and-white necklace accents paid homage to **"The Albatross,"** a track off *The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology*. Albatrosses are one of the largest flying birds and have been known to be symbols of good luck at sea for sailors. Though, in literature, it has also been a metaphor for something that's a burden.

4

How did Swift tease her announcement for *1989 (Taylor's Version)* at the last Los Angeles stop on the Eras Tour?

During the sixth and final Eras Tour show at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, on Aug. 9, 2023, Swift's costume changes showcased a variety of **new blue-toned outfits**—from ethereal powder blue dresses to a sparkling Nicole + Felicia Couture gown. All of these matched the original aesthetic of 2014's *1989*. By the end of the show, Swift had revealed the fresh cover art for the Taylor's Version of her rerecorded album and the release date: Oct. 27, 2023, nine years after the original came out.



5. TRUE OR FALSE: SWIFT HINTED AT THE RELEASE OF *EVERMORE* IN HER 2020 AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS ARTIST OF THE YEAR SPEECH.

True. Swift didn't attend the show, but she made sure to send a thank you message when she won for artist of the year. In the video, Swift is facing the wall before spinning around. The second before she turns al-ludes to the cover art for her second album of 2020, *Evermore*, which is a portrait of the back of Swift's head with her hair in a braid. The album dropped on Dec. 11, 2020, a few weeks after the AMAs.

6. *In the "Bejeweled" video, what does Swift wear in her hair to hint at* Speak Now (Taylor's Version)*?*

The whimsical music video for "Bejeweled" houses a number of Easter eggs hinting at the impending release of Swift's rerecord of 2010's *Speak Now*. The singer gets extra creative with the hints in certain scenes that show close-up shots of her face that highlight heart-shaped hair clips. In one, there's a "T" and an "S" inside the hearts on the clips (signifying her initials), and in another, there's an **"S" and an "N"**, which stand for *Speak Now*, naturally.

7. What Easter egg about 2019's *Lover* album did Swift say she hid in the vertical video for "Delicate," off *Reputation*?

Swift released her dance-centric video for "Delicate" in March 2018, and a few months later, made a vertical video of the track. It's a lo-fi, chill clip of her singing to the camera, and towards the end, she starts to move her hands around her face. When her hands get close to the lens, we see that she's sporting a pastel-colored manicure. She admitted to *Entertainment Weekly*, "I foreshadowed [**the tone of *Lover***] ages ago in a Spotify vertical video for 'Delicate' by painting my nails those [pastel] colors."

CHAPTER 5

8. TO WHAT TIME WAS TAYLOR'S WATCH CHOKER FROM HER 2024 GRAMMY AWARDS OUTFIT SET?

Swift celebrated her Grammy nomination for album of the year for *Midnights*—and win—with a vintage jeweled black choker featuring a white watch face with both hands pointing to 12, aka **midnight.** Later, keen observers also believed Swift was paying tribute to silent film star Clara Bow, who wore a similar watch choker accessory, and whom Swift sings about in her *The Tortured Poets Department* track "Clara Bow." Swift announced the April 2024 release of *TTPD* that night.

9

The sequined catsuit Taylor wore to the 2023 iHeartRadio Music Awards looked very similar to something she wore in which one of her music videos?

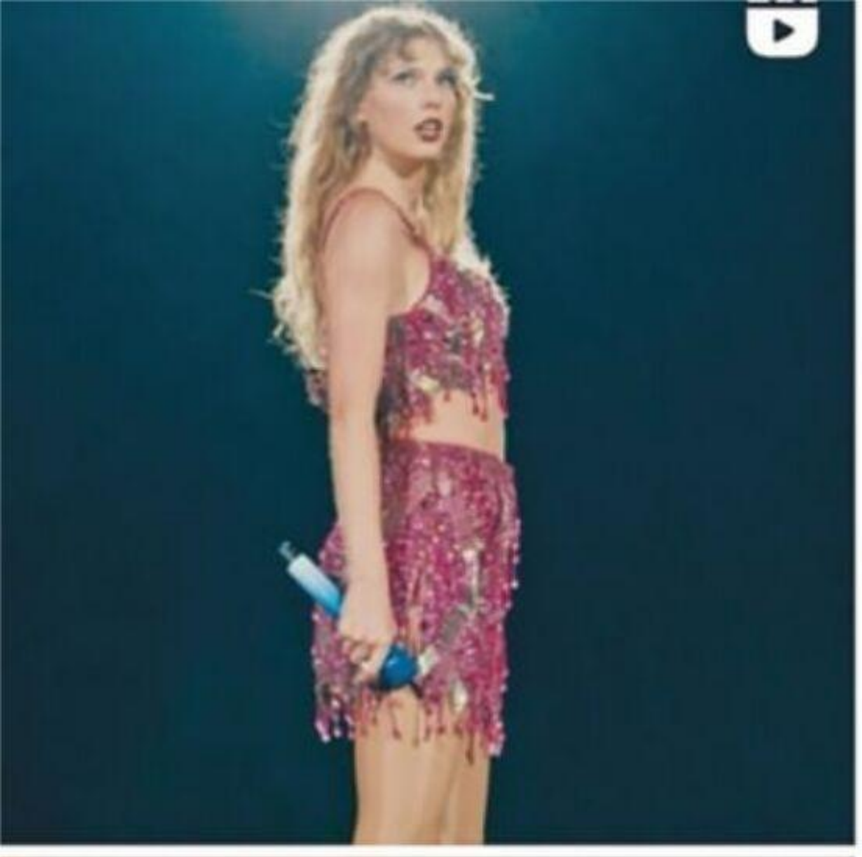
At the 2023 iHeartRadio Music Awards, where Swift was honored with the Innovator Award, the singer wore a sequined catsuit from Alexandre Vauthier's spring 2023 collection that had both built-in heeled boots and a hood. It's speculated that the outfit offered a throwback to the hooded long coat she rocked in the **"...Ready for It?"** music video from 2017—a long-game hint that *Reputation (Taylor's Version)* is coming?

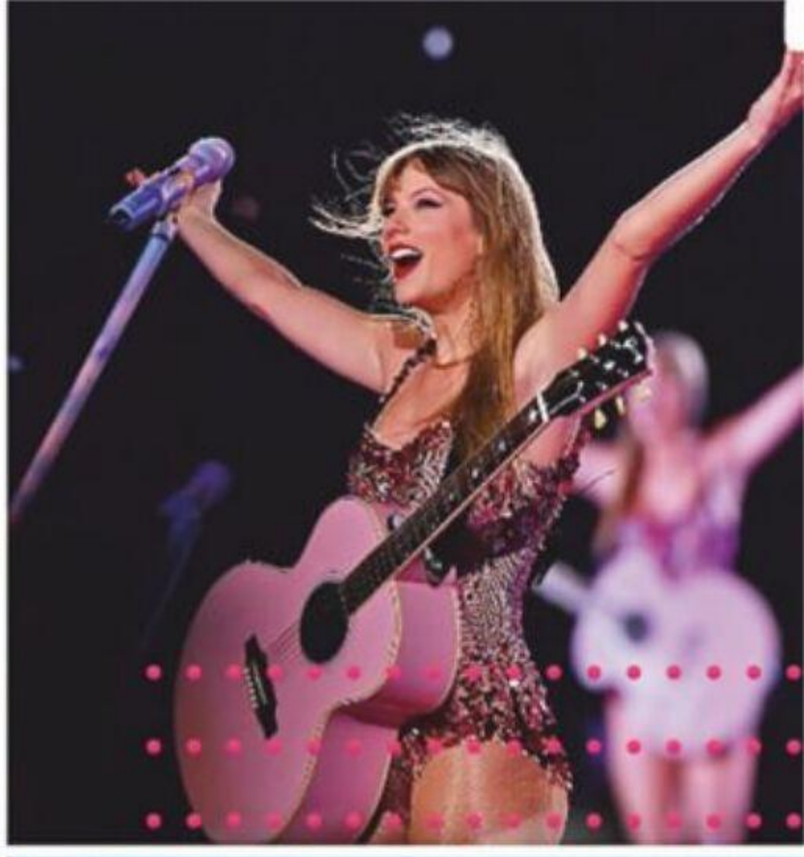
SOCIAL

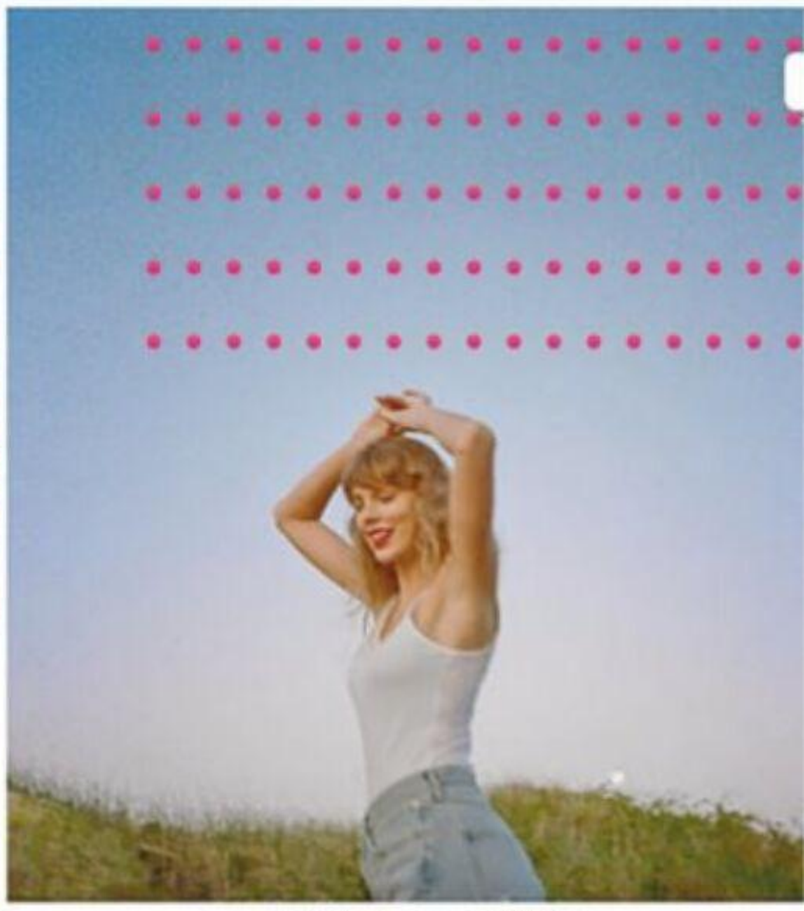
CHAPTER 6

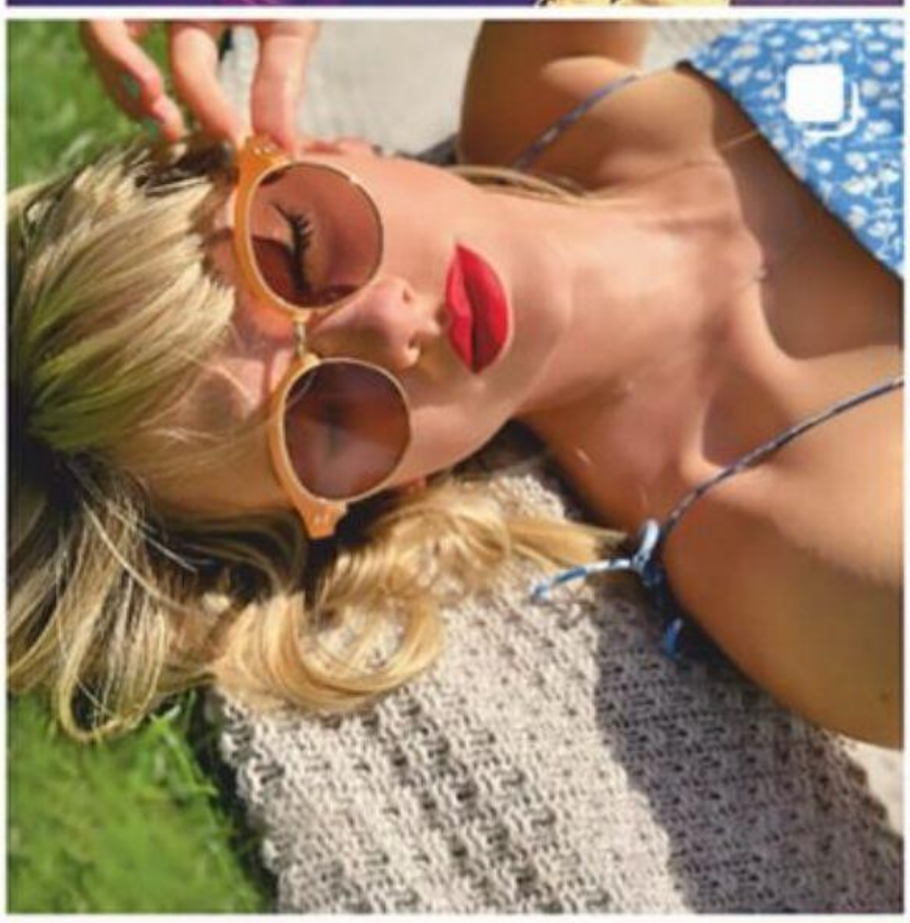
THE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

WANT TO KNOW WHAT
SWIFT IS PLANNING NEXT?
READ BETWEEN THE LINES

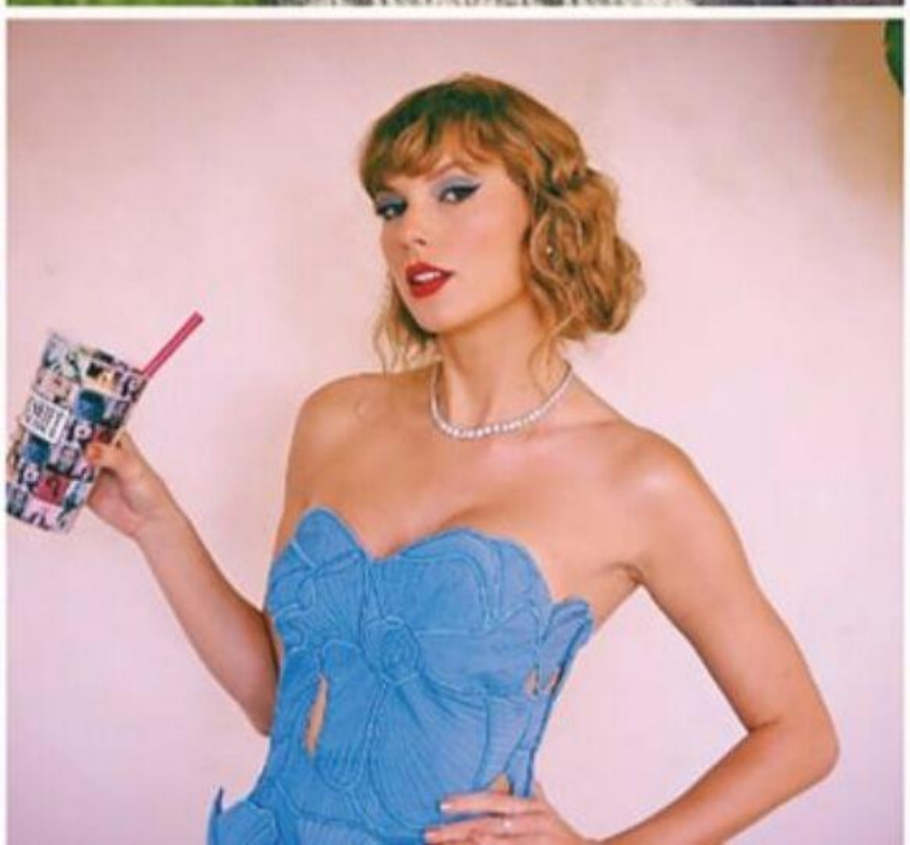
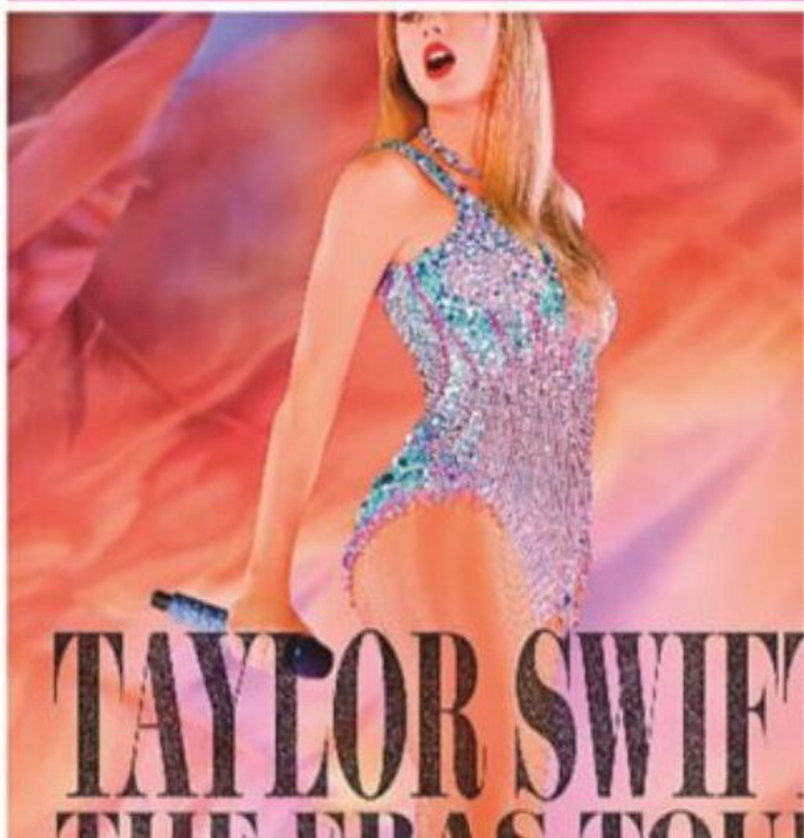








GROVE
TAYLOR SWIFT
THE ERAS TOUR
TAYLOR SWIFT
THE ERAS TOUR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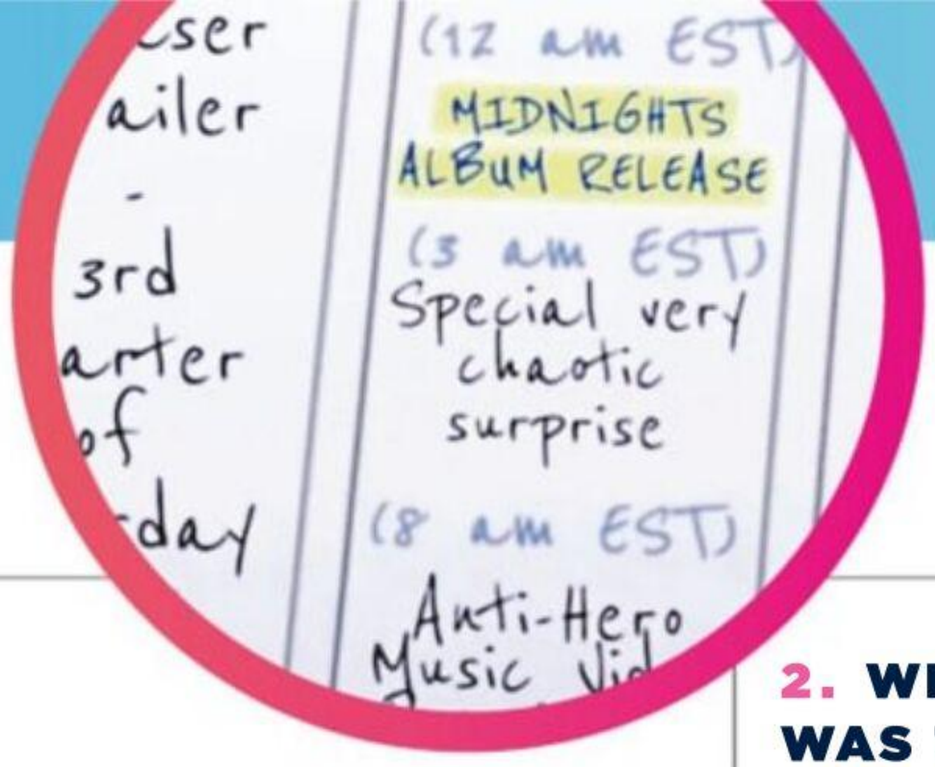
THE ERAS TOU



1 What was the meaning behind Swift's Instagram selfie from April 27, 2020?

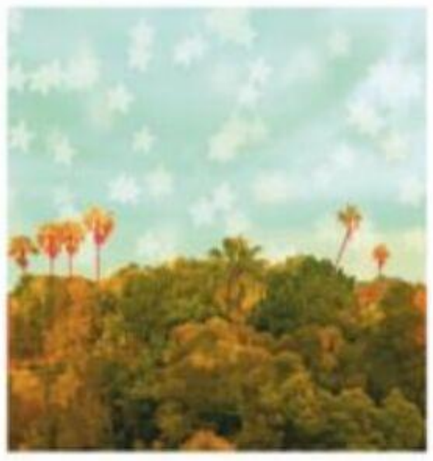
Like everyone else during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Swift was at home. But she wasn't sitting idly. On April 27, 2020, she posted a close-up of herself on the couch wearing a black top. The caption read: "Not a lot going on at the moment." It's the same phrase she wears on a shirt in the "22" music video. To Swifties, it was a clue that there was in fact *something* going on. **That something was *Folklore***. In July 2020, Swift posted an Instagram story announcing a special 7-inch and 12-inch vinyl with the first recording and lyrics for *Folklore*'s lead single, "Cardigan," which she'd sent to Aaron Dessner on April 27, 2020, the same day she supposedly didn't have "a lot going on."

2. WHAT WAS THE "CHAOTIC SURPRISE" SWIFT REFERRED TO IN THE "MIDNIGHTS MANIFEST" POSTED TO INSTAGRAM ON OCT. 16, 2022?

In the 30-second animated video, the viewer is taken to a schedule that starts on Thursday, Oct. 20, marking a *Midnights* teaser trailer set to premiere during the third quarter of Thursday Night Football on Prime Video. The camera then pans to the next day—*Midnights* release day—which also indicates a "special very chaotic surprise" at 3 a.m. EST, that was bookended by the announcement of the "Anti-Hero" music video premiere. That 3 a.m. surprise turned out to be the "3 a.m. version" of *Midnights* that included seven new songs.

3. *What plant did Taylor post on Instagram to hint at the upcoming release of 2019's* Lover*?*

On Feb. 24, 2019, Swift posted a picture on Instagram of a landscape with a blue sky and green trees in the foreground, with seven **palm trees** reaching up above the canopy. An overlay of white translucent stars dotted the image. Taylor used seven palm tree emojis as the caption, and Swifties knew it was a clue. Sure enough, she was hinting at her seventh album, *Lover*. "I posted that the day that I finished the seventh album," Swift told *Entertainment Weekly*. "I couldn't expect [my fans] to know that. I figured they'd figure it out later, but a lot of their theories were actually correct."

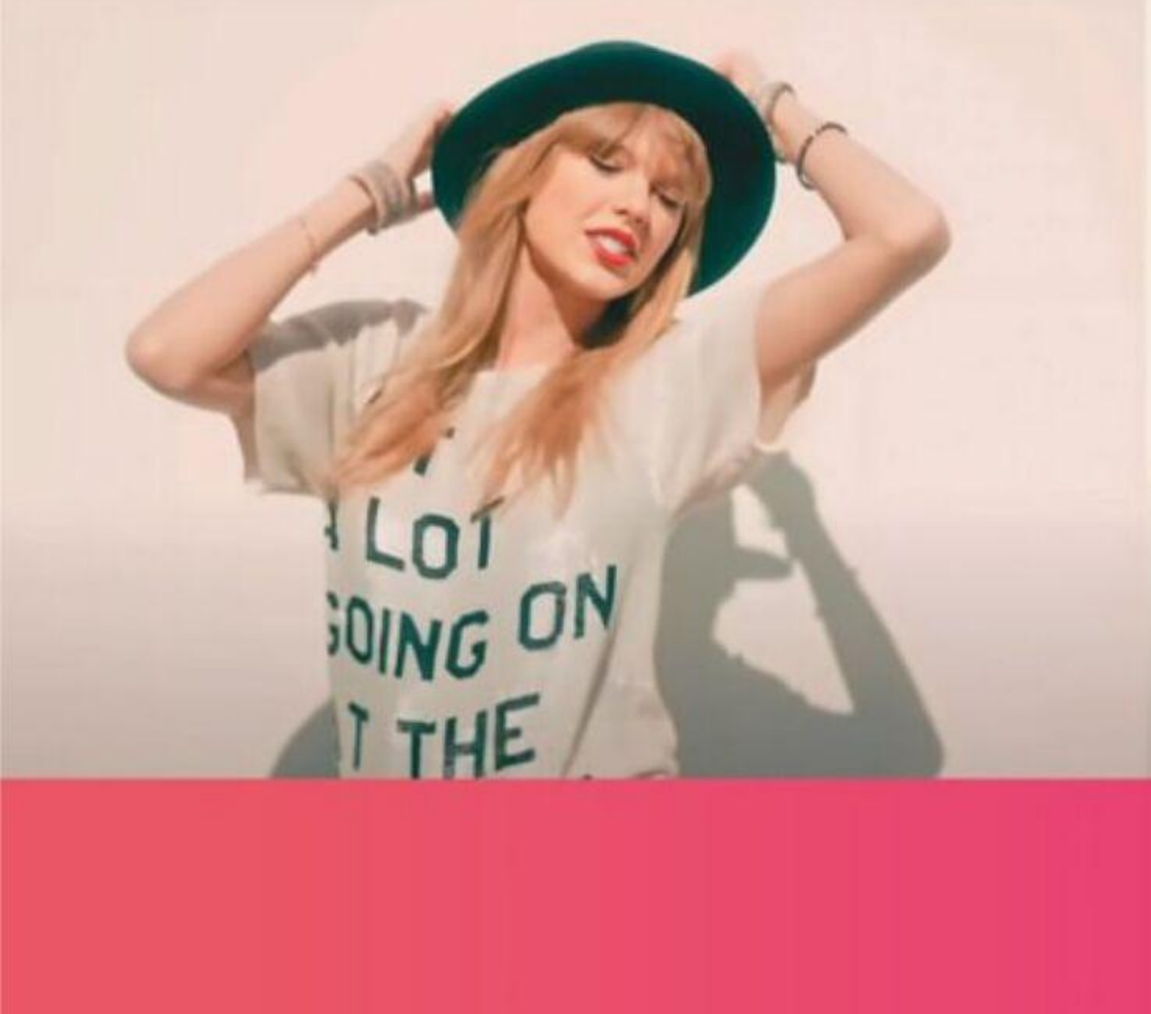


CHAPTER 6

4

On Nov. 22, 2020, Swift again posted a photo of herself on Instagram with the caption, "Not a lot going on at the moment." What did she mean this time?

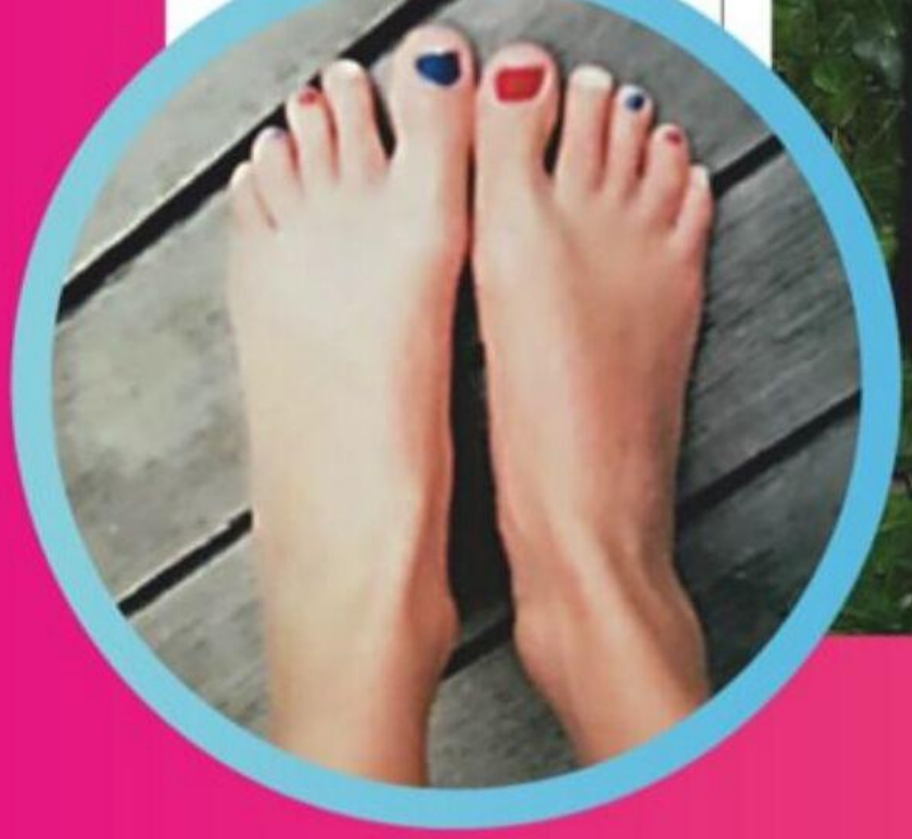
At first, some believed it was a clue that she was rerecording her 2012 album, *Red*. The phrase "Not a lot going on at the moment" is one she wore on a white T-shirt in the music video for "22," off *Red*, and the black, thick-rimmed eyeglasses sitting on the table in the photo also look like the pair she wears in the "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together" video. In hindsight, it seems more likely that it was a throwback to the same hint she gave on Instagram about *Folklore* on April 27, 2020... to **hint at *Folklore*'s forthcoming sister album, *Evermore*.**



CHAPTER 6

5. WHAT DID TAYLOR'S RED, WHITE AND BLUE PEDICURE REPRESENT IN HER SOCIAL MEDIA POST ON OCT. 17, 2018?

In an effort to get more young people to participate in early voting, Swift posted a polaroid of her patriotic red, white and blue pedicure that took a cue from **the American flag.** "It makes it so quick and easy to go and cast your vote before November 6," she wrote in the caption, saying she wished she knew about it when she was 18. "You can check out your state's early voting dates at the link in my bio."



6

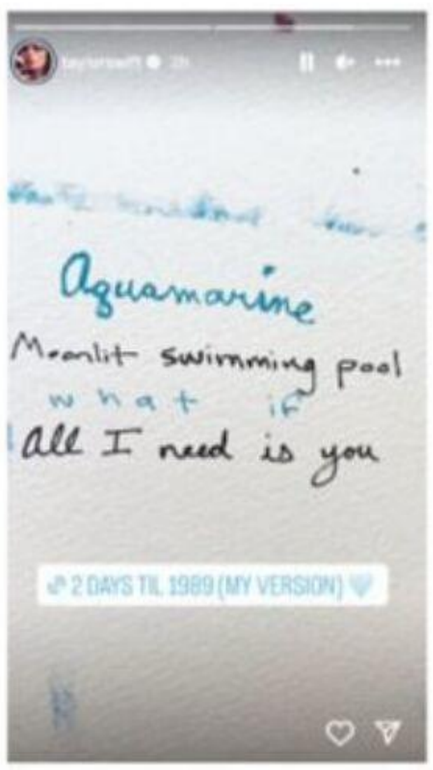
What did fans think Swift was referencing in her "All's fair in love and poetry" note regarding *TTPD* on social media on Feb. 4, 2024?

Swift began dating Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce in the latter half of 2023. In a November 2023 interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, Kelce talked about how Swift would turn life into poetry with her songs. "I've never been a man of words," he told the outlet. "Being around her, seeing how smart Taylor is, has been f---ing mind-blowing. I'm learning every day." So when Taylor posted her note as a caption to the cover art for *The Tortured Poets Department*, some fans theorized it as her way of **giving a nod to what Kelce said in the interview**. Was he foreshadowing *TTPD*?

03:11:47:07

7. WHICH VAULT SONG LYRICS DID SWIFT TEASE VIA INSTAGRAM STORIES DAYS BEFORE *1989 (TAYLOR'S VERSION)* DROPPED?

Ahead of *1989 (Taylor's Version)*, Swift gave fans a taste of what was in store by revealing a few lyrics from **"Slut!"**, **"Is It Over Now?"** and **"Suburban Legends"** on her Instagram Stories daily, from Oct. 24–26, 2023. She also used different pens (quill, fountain and glitter gel) to write the lyrics. Each type of pen evokes a feeling she had while writing the song or what she hopes the listener will feel when they hear it.



8. *What appeared when a user on Threads "liked" conversations that included certain TTPD-related hashtags?*

Less than a week before *The Tortured Poets Department* launched in April 2024, Taylor worked with Instagram and Threads to include some Easter eggs for Swifties. It began with a countdown that popped up when fans went to Swift's Instagram profile and swiped down to refresh the page. When visitors clicked on the countdown, they were taken to Swift's Threads page, where conversations with the hashtags #TTPD, #TSTTPD, #The Tortured Poets Department, #Tortured Poets, #Swifties or #Taylor Swift revealed a shimmer effect. When someone "liked" a post tagged with those hashtags, **they were rewarded with celebratory hearts that appeared on-screen.**

9. True or False: Taylor was promoting *Midnights* when she introduced her beaded friendship bracelets theme on Instagram.

False. While the lyric "make the friendship bracelets" does appear in the *Midnights* song "You're on Your Own, Kid," Swift used the DIY beaded bracelets before then, as a means to promote the release of *Lover*. On Aug. 5, 2019, Swift posted a rainbow-tinged photo of her arm that features a stack of friendship bracelets that spell out the words "cat," "Benji" (the shortened name of her cat Benjamin Buttons), "proud," "fearless" and of course, "lover." Still, Swift-themed beaded friendship bracelets became more of a phenomenon during the Eras Tour.

CAT
BENJI
TH
PROUD
FEARLESS
LOVER

CHAPTER 7

NAMES

THE NAME-DROPS

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE TAYLOR SINGS ABOUT IN SOME OF HER SONGS?

1. TRUE OR FALSE. "HEY STEPHEN" IS ABOUT STEPHEN SONDHEIM.

False. It's about Stephen Barker Liles of the band Love and Theft, a country act she toured with in 2008. During her *Fearless* era, 19-year-old Taylor's crush on the vocalist manifested into this song. Liles didn't get to hear the track before it dropped, but once he did, he said, "It's a nice song. It's like the nicest song you could write about somebody, so that was cool."

2. *Who are Betty, James and Inez?*

These are the names of three of **Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds' children.** Swift—who's close friends with the couple and says they are "the second and third people I play every new song that I write"—incorporated the names into the lyrics of "Betty" off 2020's *Folklore*. The song is connected to the tracks "August" and "Cardigan," which tell the woven story of a teenage love triangle from three different perspectives over the years. "The names are the names of our kids, but you know, we trust her implicitly," said Reynolds in an interview with SiriusXM. "She's very sensitive to any of that stuff, and obviously the song has nothing to do with our kids other than our kids' names."

3 Who is Abigail from "Fifteen"?

The "red-head" Swift mentions in her song "Fifteen" is a **longtime pal.** "I wrote this around the story line [sic] of my best friend from high school, Abigail," Taylor said. "I started everything with the line, 'Abigail gave everything she had to a boy who changed his mind' and wrote everything else from that point, almost backwards. I just decided I really wanted to tell that story about our first year of high school because I felt in my freshman year, I grew up more than any year in my life so far." During the Eras Tour's second night in Nashville, Taylor surprised everyone, including Abigail, when she performed "Fifteen" to the packed crowd.

CHAPTER 7

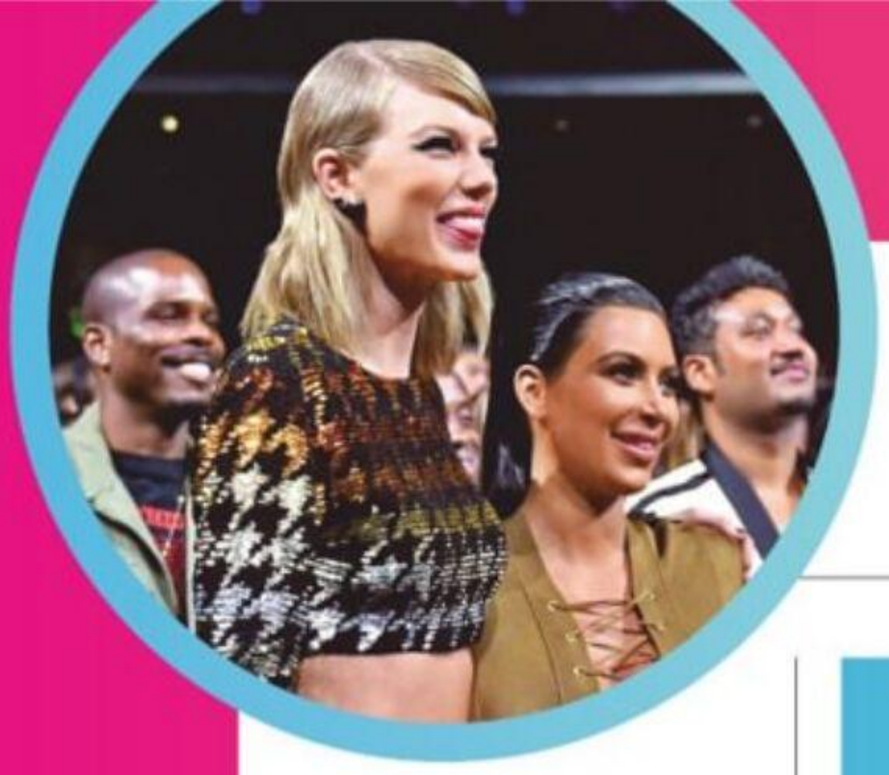
4. WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE OF "MARJORIE"?

Marjorie Finlay is **Swift's late maternal grandmother**, and the *Evermore* track is a tribute to her. Marjorie was an opera singer who had her own television show, and the song features a recording of her operatic voice. When announcing her album, Swift said one track starred her "grandmother, Marjorie, who still visits me sometimes... if only in my dreams."

5

How many people does Swift name-drop in "The Tortured Poets Department"?

Five. Welsh poet Dylan Thomas and musician-poet Patti Smith are part of the song's chorus and also allude to the fact that they both lived at New York's Chelsea Hotel at some point. The lyrics also mention pop singer Charlie Puth, lamenting that he "should be a bigger artist." Midway through the track, she sings about "Lucy," likely a reference to her pal Lucy Dacus, of Boygenius, and "Jack," probably a nod to Jack Antonoff. "The Tortured Poets Department" is reportedly about Taylor's ex, Matty Healy of The 1975, who also knows Dacus and Antonoff.



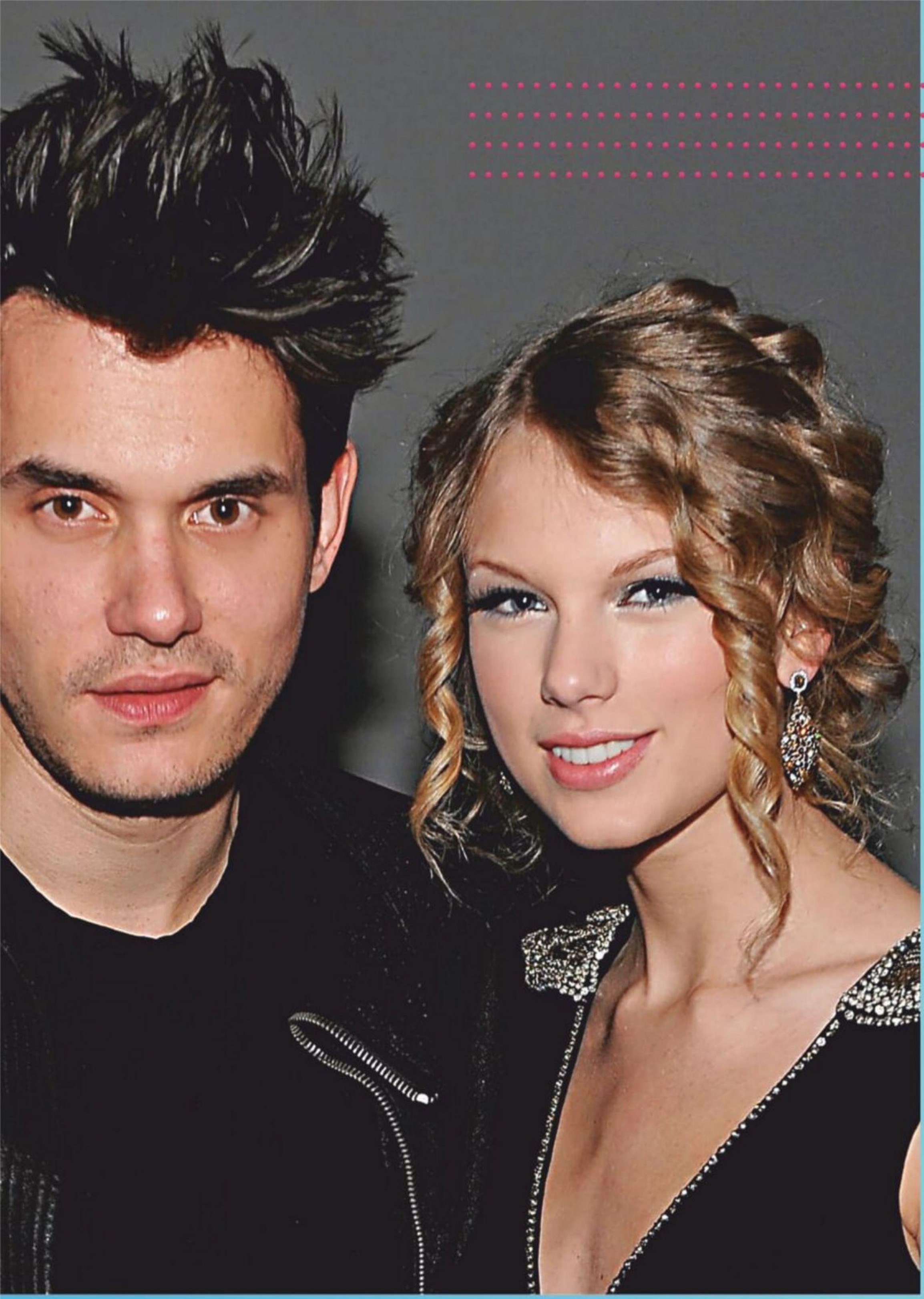
6. *Who is "thanK you aIMee" about?*

In the clapback track "thanK you aIMee," Swift returned to one of her very first techniques for hiding Easter eggs—capitalizing certain letters. This one spells out "Kim," likely meaning **Kim Kardashian**. The song seemingly touches on their ongoing beef since 2016, and even references how Kardashian and her eldest daughter North once posted a since-deleted clip to their joint TikTok account lip-synching and dancing to Swift's song "Shake It Off." Taylor sings on the track, "I don't think you've changed much / And so I changed your name and any real defining clues, and one day your kid comes home singing / A song that only us two is gonna know is about you."

7

Who is "Dear John" suspected to be about?

John Mayer. In the breakup ballad, Swift sings about being "too young to be messed with." Mayer and Swift dated when he was 32 and she was 19. The two were initially linked when they collaborated on the song, "Half of My Heart," off his 2009 Grammy-nominated record, *Battle Studies*. By December 2009, they were rumored to be dating, though things reportedly fizzled out by February 2010. Later that year, Taylor released *Speak Now*, featuring "Dear John" at track No. 5, which supposedly details her feelings about their relationship.



CLARA
BOW

8

Why did Taylor write a song about Clara Bow?

Swift wanted to create a song commenting on her experience in the music industry for *The Tortured Poets Department*. "I used to sit in record labels trying to get a record deal when I was a little kid," she said. "And they'd say, 'You know, you remind us of' and then they'd name an artist, and then they'd kind of say something disparaging about her, 'But you're this, you're so much better in this way or that way.' And that's how we teach women to see themselves, as like, 'You could be the new replacement for this woman who's done something great before you.'" She added, "I picked women who have done great things in the past and have been these archetypes of greatness in the entertainment industry. **Clara Bow was the first 'it girl.'**"

9. ON WHAT *TTPD* SONG DOES SWIFT NAME-DROP HERSELF?

Swift has been known to drop her name into songs (see "Look What You Made Me Do," "Ready for It?" and the "Love Story" parody "Thug Story" with T-Pain, to name a few). In the *TTPD* track **"Clara Bow,"** after mentioning silent film star Clara Bow and '70s rock icon Stevie Nicks, she sings, "You look like Taylor Swift in this light / We're loving it / You've got edge, she never did"—tongue-in-cheek commentary on how she knows she'll one day be replaced in the music industry.

XOXO EXTRA

CHAPTER 8

THE ERAS TOUR

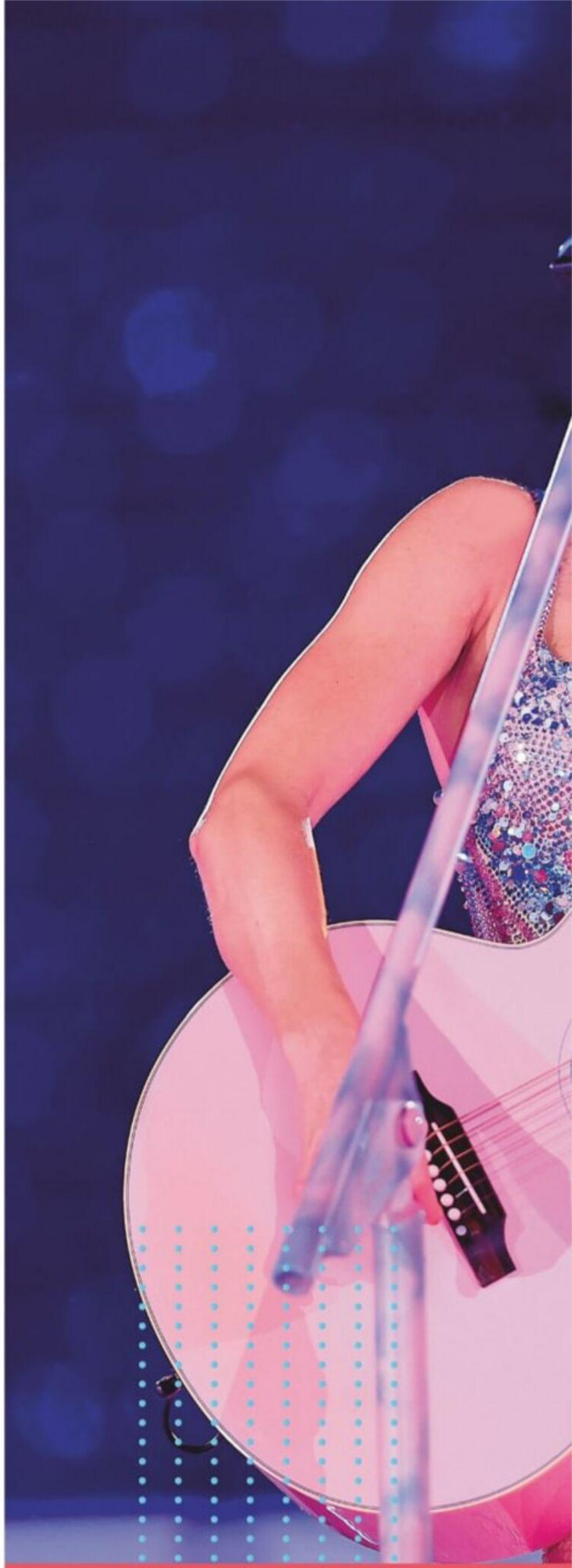
EASTER EGGS ABOUND IN SWIFT'S EXTRAVAGANT STAGE SHOW SPANNING 11 ALBUMS

CHAPTER 8

1

Why does Taylor open her Eras Tour shows with *Lover*?

Lover means many things to Swift. The 2019 album is the first for which she owns the masters after leaving Big Machine Records for Republic Records. And since Swift had to cancel her Lover Fest shows due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it makes sense that she'd **want to pick up where she left off** for her first concert tour since 2018's Reputation Stadium Tour.



2

True or False: One of Taylor's dance moves during the "Bejeweled" performance came from a viral TikTok video.

True. On Oct. 23, 2022, TikTok creator Mikael Arellano posted a video of himself lip-syncing to "Bejeweled" while doing a strut followed by a twirl and a shimmy of spirit fingers. The dance went viral with millions of views. At Swift's opening concert in Glendale, Arizona, fans filmed her performing Arellano's choreography during "Bejeweled" and tagged him. Swift then invited him to be the recipient of her iconic "22" hat at one of her Philadelphia shows in May 2023.

3. DURING THE *FEARLESS* SET, SWIFT HOLDS UP HER HANDS TO MAKE WHAT SHAPE?

In a throwback to her tours for *Fearless* and *Speak Now*, Swift holds up her hands to make a **heart** toward the end of her performance of "Fearless" during the Eras Tour, to the thrill of fans who have been following her since she was a bright-eyed, teenage country star. "The heart-hand symbol means something between 'I love you' and 'thank you,'" Swift told *The New York Times* back in 2011. "It's just a sweet, simple message that you can deliver without saying a word."

4. *On what tour stop did Swift surprise boyfriend Travis Kelce with a dedicated lyric change on "Karma"?*

When Kelce traveled to **Buenos Aires, Argentina**, to support Swift during night two of her Eras Tour stop in the city in November 2023, the singer surprised him—and the crowd—with a sweet shout-out. Swift ends every concert with a glittery performance of "Karma," and during that particular show, she changed the lyric, "Karma is the guy on the screen coming straight home to me," to "Karma is the guy on the Chiefs coming straight home to me." The crowd erupted in cheers. "Yeah, no, I had no clue [she would do that]... well, I might have had a little bit of a clue, but definitely when I heard it come out of her mouth, it still shocked me," Kelce said on the Nov. 15, 2023, episode of his *New Heights* podcast.

CHAPTER 8

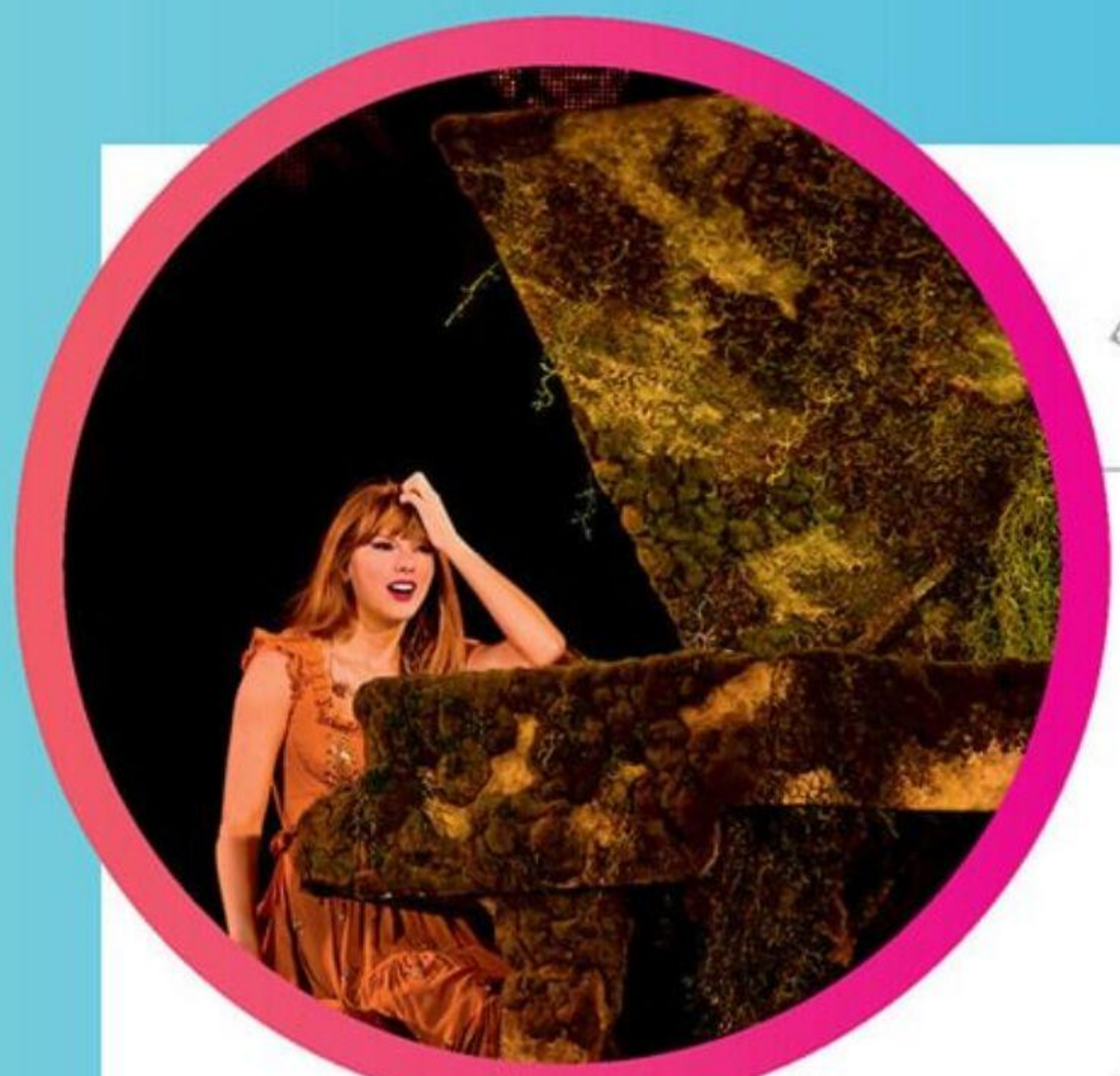
5. HOW DO SWIFT AND HER DANCERS GIVE A NOD TO TRAVIS KELCE DURING THEIR PERFORMANCE OF "SO HIGH SCHOOL"?

Swift revamped her Eras Tour setlist to include *TTPD* when she kicked off the European leg in Paris in May 2024. Fans were quick to notice some familiar moves during "So High School," a song suspected to be about Kelce. While sitting on risers, Swift and her dancers mimic celebratory touchdown moves the Kansas City Chiefs tight end has done, as well as a Kansas City fan favorite move known as swag surfing.

6

Where have fans seen the *Folklore* cottage before?

If that set piece looks familiar, it's because she performed *Folklore* songs "Cardigan," "August" and "Willow" in a version of it at the **2021 Grammy Awards.** During her Los Angeles concert, filmed for the Eras Tour movie, she said that while she was working on *Folklore*, she "immediately was picturing this album taking place in the woods in an imaginary cabin. In my fantasy, in my imagination I am not a lonely millennial woman covered in cat hair watching 700 hours of TV a day. In my imagination, I am like a woodsy Victoria lady who is wandering through the forest holding, like, a candlestick holder thing and, like, you know, collecting feathers to make my own quill to write on parchment paper. It was a whole thing."



7. WHAT IS SWIFT NODDING TO WITH HER DANCERS' COSTUMES DURING "LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO"?

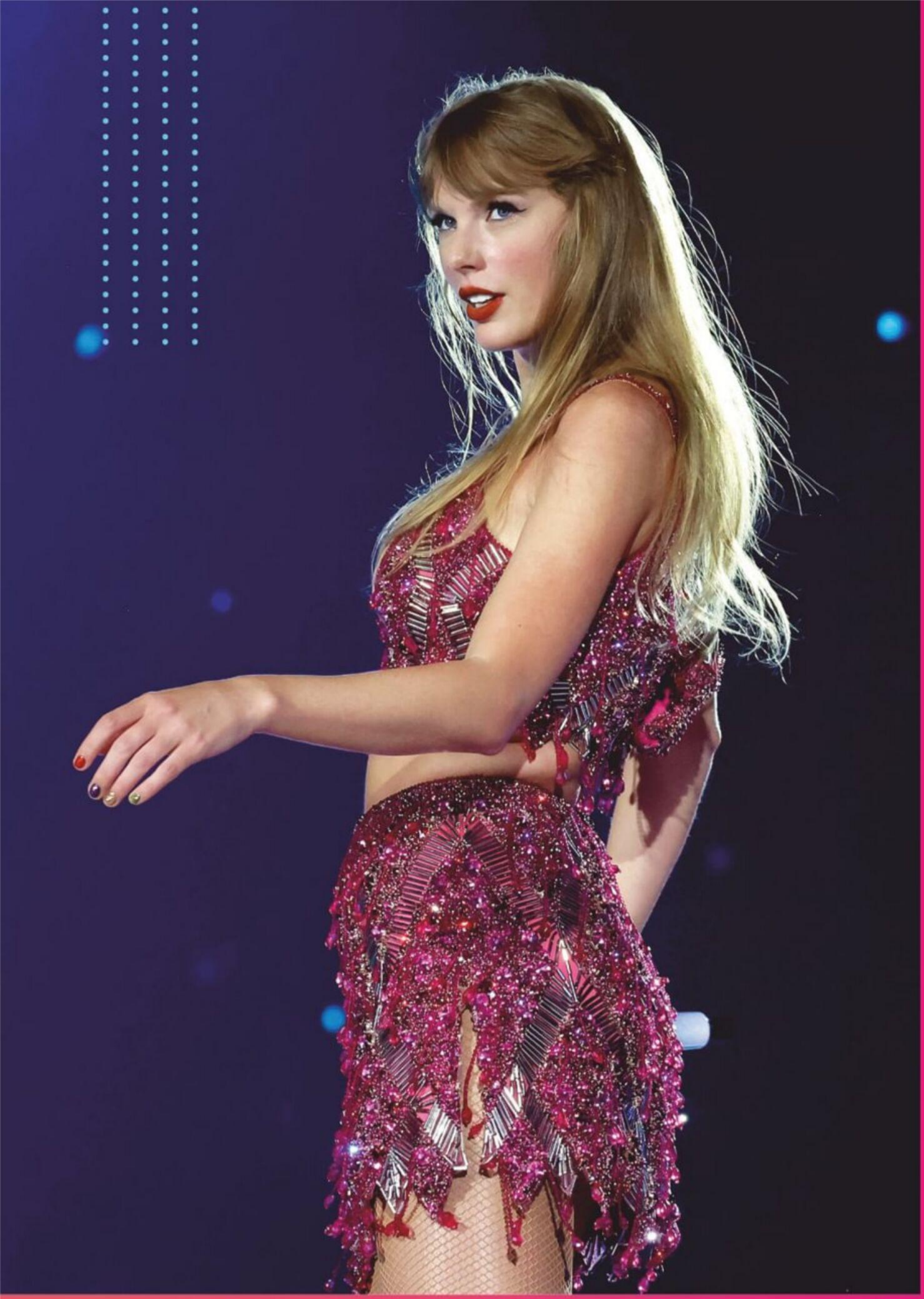
Swift's dancers and backing vocalists are wearing costumes that the singer has worn to perform throughout her career—aka "the old Taylor"—which is a hat tip to the "Look What You Made Me Do" video. They include the "Shake It Off" cheerleader uniform, the purple dress from the Speak Now World Tour, the ringmaster costume from the Red World Tour, and the pink bikini and hot pink coat from the "You Need to Calm Down" video, among others.

8. In what video does the moss-covered piano Swift plays during "Champagne Problems" appear?

While "Champagne Problems" is from Swift's *Evermore* album, the instrument is actually a callback to the "**Cardigan**" video, from her *Folklore* era. At one point during the video, Swift notices a shimmering light coming from her upright piano, prompting her to climb into it and emerge in a forest from the bench of the moss-covered piano. The same upright piano portal also takes her to a magical fantasy land in the "Willow" video.

9 What does Swift's Eras Tour manicure represent?

During the first year of her Eras Tour shows, Taylor sported a colorful manicure with a different polish color on each nail. Swifties recognize this as an Easter egg, of course, that they believe represents **the shades associated with each of her first 10 albums**: bluish-green for *Taylor Swift*, gold for *Fearless*, purple for *Speak Now*, red for *Red*, teal for *1989*, black for *Reputation*, pink for *Lover*, gray for *Folklore*, beige for *Evermore*, and dark blue for *Midnights*.



Spotify
TAYLOR SWIFT
THE TORTURED
EXIT

P-OP-UP

CHAPTER 9

THE POP-UP

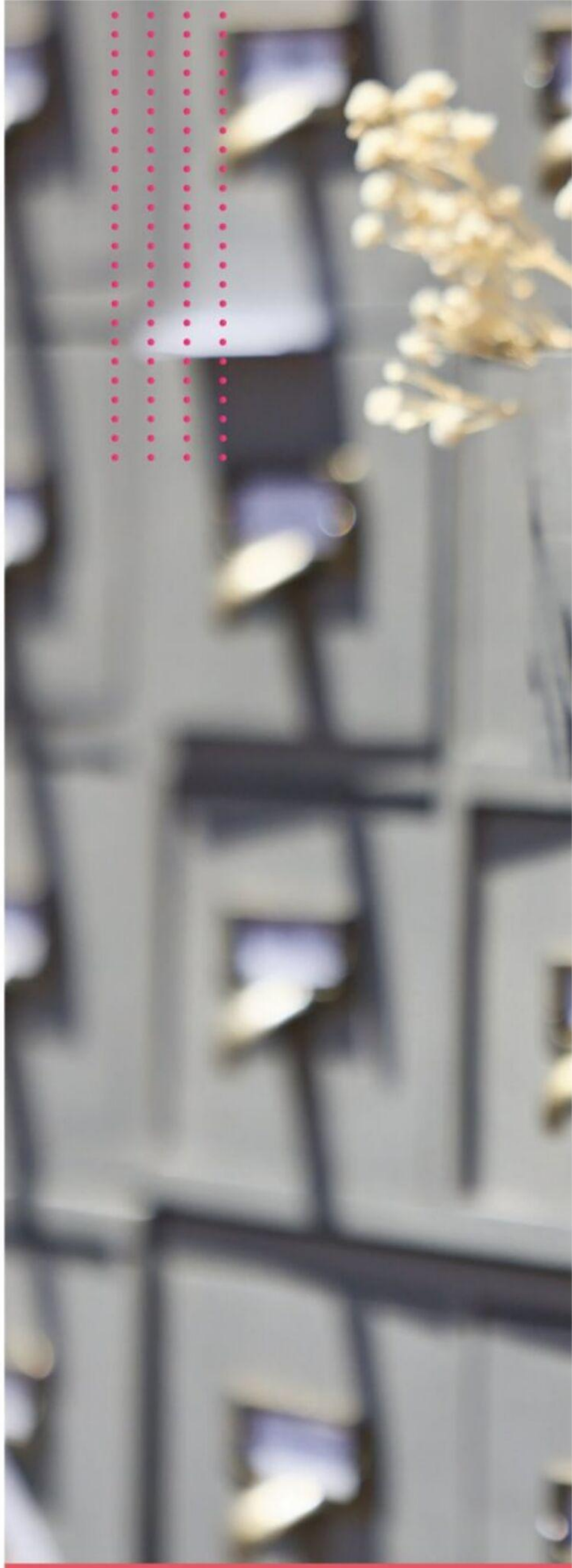
SWIFT SHARED CRYPTIC DETAILS ABOUT
THE TORTURED POETS DEPARTMENT
IN HER SPOTIFY EXHIBIT

CHAPTER 9

1

What could the 72 drawers in the library's card catalog signify?

Swifties went to work counting the number of drawers in the card catalog section, which totaled 72. Doing the math, some then deduced that 72 equals the **number of months that Swift and Joe Alwyn were together before they split up.** Of those 72, six drawers were also open, which could represent the six years of their relationship. Before *TTPD* was released fans thought the album would be mostly about Alwyn, but it appears many of the songs point to her brief romance with Matty Healy.



TAYLOR SWIFT
TTPD

TTPD
My Boy Only Breaks His Favorite Toys
TAYLOR SWIFT
TTPD
1 of 1
TAYLOR SWIFT
TTPD
Fortnight (feat Post Malone)
TTPD
Clara Bow

2

How do fans think Swift hinted at "But Daddy I Love Him" in the pop-up?

Many of the track titles for *The Tortured Poets Department* were printed on the spines of books displayed at the pop-up event. But fans believe "But Daddy I Love Him" received a different Easter egg treatment in the form of **a bust of a man's head that looks a lot like Prince Eric** from the animated Disney movie *The Little Mermaid*. In the 1989 film (yep), there's a scene in which Ariel professes her love for the prince to her father, King Triton, who destroys her trinket collection—including a statue of Eric. In that scene she yells, "But Daddy I love him!"

3. WHICH BOOK FROM THE POP-UP LIBRARY APPEARS IN THE "FORTNIGHT" VIDEO?

Located on one of the lower bookshelves is an oversized book with a brown cover and black binding with *Us* written in big black letters—possibly a wink to her hit song "The Story of Us" off 2010's *Speak Now*, which is about the start and end of a courtship. The book also makes an appearance in the "Fortnight" video when Swift, holding the manuscript, and Post Malone are lying on the ground facing each other.

4. What could be the significance of the calendar with the date Friday, Dec. 13?

Upon entering the pop-up library, there was a small round table with a typewriter and a vintage daily calendar turned to the date "Friday, December 13." All Swifties know Dec. 13 is Taylor's birthday. But in 1989—the year she was born—Dec. 13 doesn't fall on a Friday. However, Dec. 13, 2024, does. Many fans believe this could foreshadow a **release date** of some kind, perhaps for *Reputation (Taylor's Version)*?

5. WHAT'S THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NUMBER 2 AT THE *TTPD* POP-UP EXHIBIT?

Fans who visited the pop-up exhibit at The Grove in Los Angeles noticed various objects on display in two's, including pairs of candlesticks and a pair of globes. The clock was also set to 2 o'clock, and there was a hand figurine holding up a peace sign on one of the shelves, which is reminiscent of the peace sign she flashed at the Grammy Awards in 2024 while announcing *TTPD*. It became clear on April 19, 2024, what it all meant: *TTPD* turned out to be **a double album,** with the first set of songs dropped at 12 a.m. ET, and the second set released two hours later at 2 a.m.

6

What '70s rock icon is it believed that Swift pays homage to with lace in the exhibit?

On one shelf in the pop-up, there's a tambourine with a roll of lace tied to it. Fans of Fleetwood Mac would know this as a nod to **Stevie Nicks**, who played the tambourine onstage with lace hanging off it. The two have a long history: They performed together at the 2010 Grammys, and Nicks has said that listening to Taylor's song "You're on Your Own, Kid" helped her grieve the death of friend and former Fleetwood Mac bandmate Christine McVie. Nicks wrote an introductory poem for the vinyl copy of *Tortured Poets*, and Swift mentions Nicks in the song "Clara Bow," track 16 on *TTPD*.

TTPD
GROVE

7

What could the dried flowers all over the exhibit symbolize?

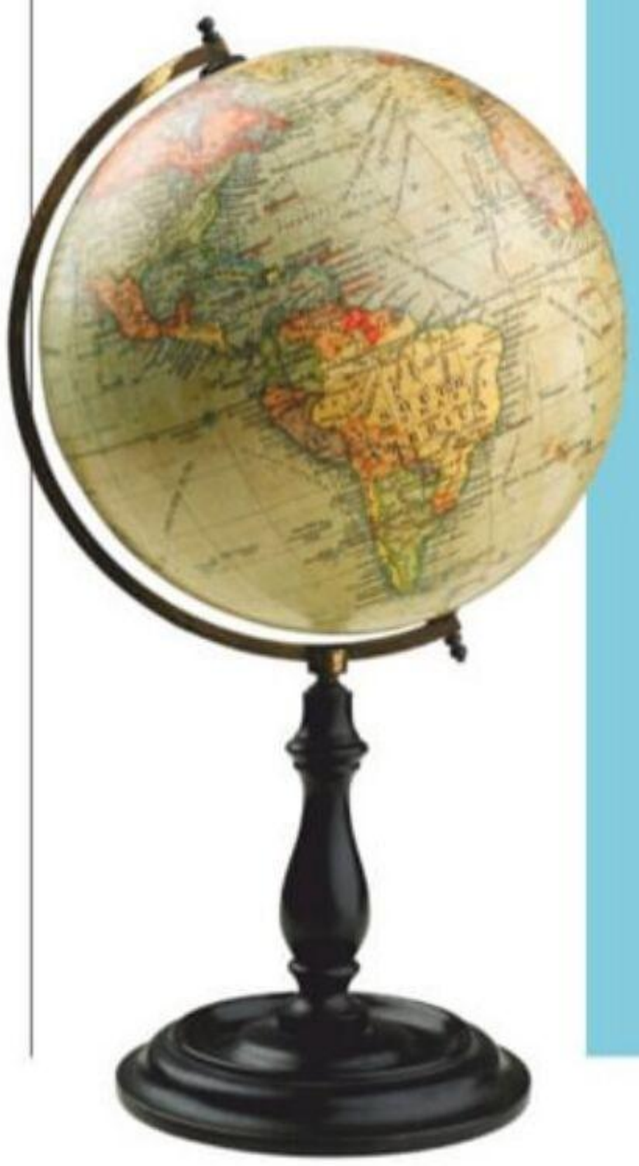
Dried-up lavender and cornelia roses are placed throughout the pop-up exhibit, which fans believe wink to the songs "Lavender Haze" from *Midnights* and "Cornelia Street" from *Lover*, both thought to be about Joe Alwyn. Could these dead flowers symbolize **the end of their relationship**? Some Swifties seem to think so.

8. WHAT DOES THE LACK OF GLITTER GEL PENS IN THE EXHIBIT MEAN?

Swift once explained that she organizes her song lyrics into three different categories: fountain pen, quill pen or glitter gel pen. To Swift, fountain pen lyrics are "about those moments you remember all too well where you can see, hear and feel everything in screaming detail," while quill pen songs are "like you're a 19th century poet crafting your next sonnet by candlelight." Glitter gel pen songs, meanwhile, are more upbeat, with "lyrics that make you want to dance, sing and toss glitter around the room." Fans quickly noted that while there were quill pens and fountain pens found at the exhibit, there were no glitter gel pens—which indicated this was not going to be a lighthearted, happy album.

9. *True or False: On one of the globes there's a pin placed on the state of Texas.*

False—it was on Florida. This is a clear reference to the *TTPD* song "Florida!!! (feat. Florence + The Machine)". But fans digging deeper also pointed to it possibly alluding to Swift's show in Tampa, Florida, in April 2023—her first concert after news hit of the singer and Joe Alwyn's breakup.



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